

DĀR AS-SUNNAH CLASSIC COLLECTION

PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL



English translation of
Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq

by Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdīsī [d. 689H]

PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL by Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdīsī [d. 689H]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Imām Aḥmad Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī [d. 689H]

The PURIFICATION of the SOUL

A textbook on Self-Development
being a translation of his work
'Mukhtaṣar Minhāj al-Qāṣidīn'



“He who purifies it has succeeded and he
who stunts it has failed.”

[QUR’ĀN (91): 9-10]

The Purification of the Soul

A textbook on Self-Development

by
Imām Aḥmad Ibn ‘Abdu’l Raḥmān
Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī [d. 689H]



Dār as-Sunnah Publishers

B I R M I N G H A M

First Published in Great Britain, June 2020 / Dhu'l-Qa'dah 1441H
by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers



DĀR AS-SUNNAH PUBLISHERS
P.O. Box 9818, Birmingham, B11 4WA, United Kingdom

W: www.darassunnah.com
E: info@darassunnah.com
E: daar-us-sunnah@mail.com

© Copyright 2020 by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers

All rights reserved Worldwide. No part of this publication may be reproduced including the cover design, utilized or transformed in any form or means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording of any information storage and retrieval system, now known or to be invented without the express permission in writing from the publisher, nor be otherwise circulated in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

British Library Cataloguing in publication Data.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Title: The Purification of the Soul
by Imām Aḥmad Ibn 'Abdu'l Raḥmān Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī
Translated from the original Arabic

ISBN 1-904336-65-5
Paper-back

Published and Typeset by: Dār as-Sunnah Publishers
First Edition, 1441 ^{AH}/2020 ^{CE}

While every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this book neither the authors, translators, nor Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, shall have any liability with respect to any loss or damages caused nor do the views expressed in this book are necessarily held by the publisher directly or indirectly by the instructions or advice contained in this book.

Content

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.....	13
----------------------------	----

THE FIRST FOUNDATION

On Repentance

(<i>al-tawba</i>)	15
1.1. An Exposition on the Divisions of Sins.....	18
1.2. Another Division: Minor and Major	19
1.3. How the Levels in the Afterlife are Distributed to Good and Evil Works Committed in the Worldly Life.....	22
1.4. What Turns the Minor Sins into Major Sins.....	26
1.5. The Conditions of Repentance.....	29
1.6. The Prerequisites of Repentance.....	35
1.7. Types of People Who Are in Continual Repentance.....	35
1.8. What the Repentant Person Should Do.....	39
1.9. Repentance as a Remedy and the Way to Break the Habit of Sin.....	39

THE SECOND FOUNDATION

On Patience and Thankfulness

(<i>al-ṣabr wa'l-shukr</i>).....	45
2.1. The Divisions of Patience.....	48
2.2. The Etiquettes of Patience.....	54
2.3. On Patience as a Remedy and what is gained by Resorting to It.....	58
2.4. On the Merit of Thankfulness.....	60
2.5. Thankfulness with Heart, Tongue and other Limbs.....	62
2.6. Thankfulness is Not Realised except with Understanding of what Allāh Loves.....	64
2.7. The Nature of the blessings and their Divisions.....	69
2.8. An Exposition of Allāh's Abundant Blessings which Cannot Be enumerated.....	70
2.9. The Blessings of Allāh in the Methods through which food reaches us.....	72
2.10. Marvels of Food and Treatment.....	77
2.11. Causes which turn people away from Thankfulness.....	79
2.12. On what Patience and Thankfulness share.....	83
2.13 Which is better: Patience or Thankfulness?.....	90

THE THIRD FOUNDATION

On Hope and Fear

(<i>al-raja' wa'l-kawf</i>).....	92
3.1. The Essence of Hope.....	92
3.2. The Excellence of Hope.....	96
3.3. The Treatment of Hope and the Way in which the state of Hope is obtained	97
3.4. Fear and its Levels.....	102
3.5. Fear is Allāh's Threat	104

3.6. The Divisions of Fear.....	105
3.7. Excellence of Fear and Hope: Which is Superior?.....	106
3.8. The Treatment Leading to Fear.....	109
3.9. The Intensity of Fear of the Angels	116
3.10. The Intensity of Fear of the Prophets	117
3.11. The Intensity of Fear of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ).....	119
3.12. The Intensity of Fear of the Companions.....	119
3.13. The Intensity of Fear of the Successors.....	121

THE FOURTH FOUNDATION

On Asceticism and Poverty

(<i>al-zuhd wa'l-faqr</i>).....	124
4.1. Poverty.....	125
4.2. The Merit of Poverty, its Preference over Sufficiency	127
4.3. The Manners of the Poor with his Poverty.....	132
4.4. The Manners of a Poor when Accepting Gifts.....	133
4.5. An Exposition on the Prohibition of Asking without a Need, and the Manners of the Desperately Poor When he Asks.....	134
4.6. States of Those Who Ask.....	137
4.7. The Nature and Merits of Asceticism, with a Mention of its Levels and Divisions.....	137
4.8. The Levels of Asceticism and its Divisions.....	139
4.9. A Detailed Explanation of Asceticism and How it is a Dire Necessity of Life.....	141
4.10. The Characteristics of Asceticism.....	146

THE FIFTH FOUNDATION

On Faith in Divine Unity and Reliance

(<i>al-tawḥīd wa'l-tawakkul</i>).....	149
5. 1. Exposition on the Merits of Reliance	149
5.2. Exposition on the States of <i>tawakkul</i> in Allāh,	

its Criteria and Deeds.....	151
5.3. Explanation of the Actions of the Those Reliant on Allāh.....	153

THE SIXTH FOUNDATION

On Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment

<i>(al-maḥabba wa'l-shawq wa'l-uns wa'l-riḍā)</i>	160
6. 1. An Exposition that the Noblest and Loftiest Pleasure is Knowledge of Allāh	166
6.2. Exposition of the Causes that Strengthen Love of Allāh.....	171
6.3. Exposition of what 'Longing for Allāh' means.....	176
6.4. Exposition of the Meaning of Allāh's Love for Man	178
6.5. The Distinguishing Marks of Man's Love for Allāh.....	180
6.6. Exposition of the Meaning of Intimacy with Allāh and Contentment with Allāh's Decree.....	185
6.7. Exposition on Contentment and Opposing Desire.....	189
6.8. An Exposition that Supplication is not in Conflict with Contentment [with Divine Decree].....	194

THE SEVENTH FOUNDATION

On Intention, Sincerity and Truthfulness

<i>(al-niyya wa'l-ikhlās wa'l-ṣidq)</i>	198
7.1. Intention, its Nature, Merit and Related Issues.....	199
7.2. Actions are divided into Three Categories.....	202
7.3. Sincerity, its Merits, Reality and Degrees.....	207
7.4. Exposition of the Reality of Sincerity	209
7.5. Exposition on the Judgement of the Tarnished Act and the Worthiness of the Reward for it.....	211
7.6. On Truthfulness, its Merit and Reality	212

THE EIGHTH FOUNDATION

On Self-Reckoning and Vigilance

(<i>muḥāsaba wa'l- murāqaba</i>).....	217
8.1. The First Station: Conditioning of the Soul (<i>mushārāṭa</i>).....	219
8.2. The Second Station: Concerning Vigilance (<i>murāqaba</i>).....	223
8.3. The Third Station: Accountability after worship (<i>muḥāsaba</i>).....	225
8.4. The Fourth Station: Concerning Punishment of the Self for its Shortcomings (<i>mu'āqaba</i>).....	227
8.5. The Fifth Station: Self-Striving (<i>mujāhada</i>).....	229
8.6. The Sixth Station: Concerning reproving the Self and Reprimanding it (<i>mu'ātaba</i>).....	231

THE NINTH FOUNDATION

On Contemplation

(<i>al-tafakkur</i>).....	234
9.1. Exposition on the Essence of Contemplation and its benefits.....	236
9.2. Contemplation on Allāh's Essence is forbidden	239

THE TENTH FOUNDATION

On the Remembrance of Death and the Afterlife

(<i>dhikr al-mawt wa-mā ba'dahu</i>).....	243
10.1. The Excellence of the Remembrance of Death.....	245
10.2. The Cause of Lengthy Hopes.....	248
10.3. People's Diverse Ranks in Lengthy Hopes.....	250
10.4. Agonies of Death and the States Preferable upon its Advent.....	252
10.5. The Death of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ).....	253
10.6. The Death of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq	

(<i>radīy Allāhu ‘anhu</i>).....	258
10.7. The Death of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (<i>radīy Allāhu ‘anhu</i>).....	259
10.8. The Death of ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān (<i>radīy Allāhu ‘anhu</i>).....	261
10.9. The Death of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (<i>radīy Allāhu ‘anhu</i>)....	262
10.10. On Sayings of those Near Death among the Companions.....	263
10.11. Visiting the Graveyard.....	264
10.12. On the True the Nature of Death.....	267
10.13. Exposition on the Grave.....	270
10.14. Concerning the Circumstances of the Deceased from the time when the Horn is Blown to his Final Residence in Paradise or Hell.....	273
10.15. Hellfire and from it Allāh’s Refuge is Sought.....	277
10.16. Loving Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ).....	279
10.17. Description of Paradise, we ask Allāh from His Virtue to Grant us Entry Therein.....	281
10.18. The Wide Scope of Allāh’s Mercy.....	283-288

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

Shaykh *al-Imām, al-Zāhid, al-Ābid, al-Anḥad al-ʿAllāmah* Najmuddīn Abu'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Shaykh *al-Imām al-ʿĀlim al-ʿĀmil al-Zāhid al-Ābid al-ʿAllāmah* ʿIzzuddīn Abū ʿAbdu'llāh Muḥammad Ibn Shaykh *al-Imām al-ʿĀlim al-ʿĀmil al-Zāhid al-Ābid al-ʿAllāmah* Shaykh *ul-Islām Mufti ul-Anām, Sayyid ul-Ulama wa'l-Hukkām*, Shamsuddīn Abū Muḥammad ʿAbdu'l-Raḥmān ibn Shaykh *al-Imām al-ʿĀlim al-ʿĀmil al-ʿĀrif al-Zāhid al-Warī* Shaykh *ul-Islām* Abū ʿUmar Muḥammad Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī al-Ḥanbalī said:

All praise is due to Allāh Whose Mercy covers all of his servants and has specified those who have obedience with guidance to the path of guidance and has granted them, by His *Lutf* (Subtlety and Gentleness), to righteous actions and they have gained success by reaching the intent.

I praise Him, affirming the abundant aid which He imparts, and I

seek refuge in Him from expulsion and distance [from Him]. I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allāh alone with no partner, a testimony which is stored for the Abode of Resurrection. I testify that Muḥammad is His servant and messenger who clarified the path of guidance and accuracy, suppressed the rejectors and deniers from the people of deviation and stubbornness. May Allāh's peace and blessings be upon him, to proceed:

One time I came across the book *Minḥāj al-Qāṣidīn*⁷ by *Shaykh al-Imām al-'Alim al-Awḥad*, Jamāluddīn al-Jawzī (*rahimahullāh*) and I saw that it was of the most magnificent and beneficial of books containing many benefits. I came across at a certain location and I desired to obtain it and read through it. When I contemplated on it for a second time I found more than what I had thought was in it. However, I found that the book was simple and thus I wanted to comment on it in this *Mukhtaṣar* which will contain most of its intents and important aspects and benefits whether it be the clear issues mentioned in the beginning of it related to the *furū'*, as these are famous matters in the books of *fiqh* and known among the people, as the intent of the book is not to deal with those matters.⁸

I did not adhere to preserving the arrangement of the book and its specific terminologies, rather I mentioned some of them in a way and meaning so as to be brief. I may have mentioned a ḥadīth or something else which was relevant to it and Allāh knows best. I ask Allāh the Most Kind to bring benefit with it and from reading, listening or looking at it, and to make it sincerely for Allāh's Face, and to seal it with good for us; and to grant us success to whatever statements and actions please Him. And may Allāh overlook our shortcomings and our negligence, He is Sufficient for us and the Best Trustee of affairs.

⁸ The intent of the book is as an admonishment, it is a work of heart softening (*raqā'iq*), *sulūk* and actions of the heart (*a'māl al-qulūb*).

THE FIRST FOUNDATION

On Repentance (*al-tawba*)

Know that sins are a cover from the Beloved [Allāh], while turning away from whatever creates distance from the Beloved is obligatory. This is not perfected except with knowledge (*ilm*), regret (*nadm*) and resoluteness (*azm*). When a person does not know that sins are a reason for being distant from the Beloved [Allāh], he does not regret sins and does not feel sorrow for traversing the path of desires, and if he does not feel grief he will not return [back to Allāh]. Allāh instructed [the Muslim to perform] repentance (*tawba*),

وَتُوبُوا
إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

“And turn to Allāh in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed.”

[*al-Nūr* (24): 31]

And He said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحًا

“O you who have believed, repent to Allāh with sincere

repentance.”

[*al-Tabrīm* (66): 8]

And also He said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

“Indeed, Allāh loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 222]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “O people return back to your Lord, for I repent to Allāh a hundred times a day.”¹

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs the ḥadīth of Ibn Mas‘ūd (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Allāh is More Joyous with the *tawba* of His believing slave than a man in a desolate and barren land with his riding beast with his provisions who goes to sleep then awakes to find that his riding beats with all his provisions has gone; then as thirst overcomes him and he says ‘I will go back to the place where I was before and sleep there until I die’, he places his head down on the ground to die, then awakes to find his riding beast with his provisions, food and drink—Allāh is more joyous with the repentance of a believing servant than this person with his riding beast.”²

There are many aḥādīth on this and there is a consensus on the obligation of *tawba* as sins are destructive and cause distance from Allāh, thus they have to be fled from immediately. *Tawba* is obligatory always as a person is not free from disobedience, and even if a person was free of sins of the limbs he would not be free of the

¹ Muslim, #2702 and #42; *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol.4, p.211; Abū Dāwūd, #1515; Baghawī, #1288; Nasā’ī, *‘Amal ul-Yawm wa’l-Layla* as found in *Tuhfāt ul-Ashrāf*, vol.1, p.78; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #882—from al-Aghar al-Muzanī.

² Bukhārī, vol.11, pp.88, 90; Muslim, #2744; Tirmidhī, #2499, #2500—from more than one of the Companions, may Allāh be pleased with them.

sins of the heart; and even if he was free of that, he still would not be free of Shaytān's whispers which distract with different confusing thoughts from Allāh's *dhikr*; and if a person was free of this, he would not be free of heedlessness and deficiency in his knowledge of Allāh, His Attributes and Actions—all of that is deficiency. No one is safe from these deficiencies. People fluctuate in their capabilities but the basis of that is a must. For this reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "At times I perceive that there is a veil over my heart, so I ask Allāh for forgiveness seventy times day and night."³ For this reason, Allāh ennobled him with His saying,

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ

"That Allāh may forgive for you what preceded of your sin and what will follow."

[*al-Faṭḥ* (48): 2]

As for others, what will their condition be? When the conditions of *tawba* are found it will be correct and accepted, Allāh said:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ

"And it is He who accepts repentance from his servants."

[*al-Shūrā* (42): 25]

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Allāh accepts the *tawba* of a servant as long as the pangs of death have not begun."⁴

³ Muslim, #2702, from al-Agharr.

⁴ Tirmidhī, #3531; Aḥmad, #6160, #6408; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.257; Abū Nu'aym, vol.5, p.19; Ibn Mājah, #2453; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2449; Baghawī, #1306—from Ibn 'Umar. The chain of transmission is ḥasan and also has other supporting narrations from more than one of the Companions, may Allāh be pleased with them.

Section One:
An Exposition on the Divisions of Sins

Know that people have many characteristics and descriptions, however sins can be restricted to four characteristics:

The first division is characteristics of Lordship, which causes pride, arrogance, love of praise and compliment, honour, control and the likes. These sins are destructive and some people are heedless to them, not even regarding them as sins.

The second is the satanic characteristics, which incite envy, transgression, chicanery, deception, plotting, cheating, hypocrisy, ordering corruption and so on.

The third is the animal characteristics, which incite the very base animal instincts of evil and fulfilling the desires of the stomach and private parts. It leads to illegal illicit sexual intercourse, homosexuality, theft and worldly desires—all for the sake of desire.

The fourth is the Predatory characteristics, which lead to anger, hatred, attacking people with murder and violence, seizing wealth and property—these features have different levels in the natural disposition. The animal instincts overcome a person initially, the predatory instincts secondly. If these two are found they use the mind for the satanic instincts of plotting, deception and chicanery—and then the characteristics of lordship overcome.

These are the sources of sins, then they branch out to the limbs, some of them are with the heart, such as ideas, innovation, hypocrisy and ordering evil. Some sins are with the eyes, some with hearts, some with the tongue, some with the stomach and private parts, some with the hands and feet, some with the whole body—and there is no need to elaborate on that as it is clear. Then sins split into: what is connected to the rights of people; and what is between the servant

and the rights of the servants [of Allāh]. The latter is more serious, as with the former there is the possibility of pardon so long as it is unrelated to *shirk*, Allāh's Refuge is sought. It has been narrated from 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) that she said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "The accounts (*dawāwān*) with Allāh are three: one which Allāh does not care for; one which Allāh does not leave anything and one which Allāh does not forgive, which is *shirk*. Allāh said:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ

"Indeed, he who associates others with Allāh—Allāh has forbidden him Paradise."

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 72]

As for the account which Allāh does not care a thing for—it is when the servant oppresses himself in that which is between him and Allāh, and he can be forgiven for that. As for the account which Allāh does not leave a thing for—it is when the servants oppress each other, *qisās* in these cases are inevitable.⁵

Section Two:

Another Division: Minor and Major

Know that sins are split into: minor (*sagā'ir*) and major (*kabā'ir*), and there is no difference of opinion as to them, and the aḥādīth differ on the number of major sins. The authentic aḥādīth which mention them are five:

The First: The ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Stay away from the seven destructive sins." The Companions (*radīy Allāhu 'anhum*) asked: 'O Messenger of Allāh, what

⁵ Aḥmad, vol.6, p.240; Hākim from 'Ā'ishah (*radī Allāhu 'anhā*)—the isnād is weak; also relayed by Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol.2, p.558, and he also ascribed it to Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abi Ḥātim and Ibn Mardawayh; Bayhaqī, *Shu'b ul-Īmān*.

are they?’ He replied (ﷺ): “Associating partners in worship with Allāh; magic; murdering a soul which Allāh has sanctified, except with right; consuming usury; consuming the wealth and property of an orphan; fleeing from the battlefield and defaming the chaste, simple and innocent believing women.”⁶

The Second: The ḥadīth of Ibn Mas‘ūd (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet was asked about the worst sin and said: “That you ascribe to Allāh a partner even though He created you.” Then he was asked: ‘and then what?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “That you kill your child out of fear of him eating with you (i.e. poverty).” Then he was asked: ‘and then what?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “That you commit illegal sexual intercourse with your neighbour’s wife.”⁷

The Third: The ḥadīth of ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn ‘Amr (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The major sins are: associating partners with Allāh and disobeying the parents.”⁸

The Fourth: The ḥadīth: “Shall I not inform you of the worst of sins? It is false speech.” Or he said (ﷺ): “false testimony.”⁹

The Fifth: The ḥadīth of Abū Bakrah (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned ten major sins and said: “Associating partners with Allāh and disobeying the parents.” He was reclining, then he sat up and said: “Beware of false speech and false testimony.” Abū Bakrah (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘He kept on repeating it to the extent that we said: when will he stop.’¹⁰

⁶ Bukhārī, vol.5, p.294; Muslim, #89; Abū Dāwūd, #2874 and Nasā’ī, vol.6, p.257.

⁷ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.124; Muslim, #87; Tirmidhī, #3181; Nasā’ī, vol.7, pp.89, 90 and Abū Dāwūd, #2310.

⁸ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.483; Tirmidhī, #3024; and Nasā’ī, vol.7, p.89.

⁹ Bukhārī, vol.5, p.182; Muslim, #88—from Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

¹⁰ Bukhārī, vol.5, p.193; Muslim, #87; and Tirmidhī, #2302

The scholars differ regarding the major sins and there are many views on them, the aḥādīth on the major sins do not indicate that they are to be restricted. Perhaps the Legislator intended ambiguity so that people would be afraid of sins. However, the types of major sins are known from the aḥādīth and also the worst of the major sins. As for the least of the minor sins, there is no way to know it.

The scholars discussed the numbers of the major sins, and it was narrated from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he said: ‘They are four.’ Though it was narrated from Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he said: ‘They are seven.’ While Ibn ‘Umar’s enumeration was mentioned to Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) he would say: ‘They are closer to being seventy rather than seven.’

Abū Sālih relayed from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he said: “[A major sin is] that which obligates a legal punishment (*ḥadd*) in the worldly life.” From Ibn Mas‘ūd that the major sins are mentioned from the opening of *Sūrah al-Nisā*’ up until,

إِنْ تَحْتَسِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ

“If you avoid the major sins which you are forbidden.”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4): 31]

Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr said: ‘It is every sin for which Allāh promised the Hellfire.’

Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī said: The major sins are seventeen which have been compiled from the reports. Four are in the heart: *shirk*, continual disobedience, despairing from Allāh’s Mercy and feeling safe from Allāh’s Plan. Four are with the tongue: false testimony, slandering chaste women, false and evil oaths and magic. Three of them are with the stomach: drinking alcohol, consuming the wealth of the orphan out of oppression and usury. Two of them are with the private parts:

illegal sexual intercourse and homosexuality. Two of them are with the hands: murder and theft. One is with the feet: fleeing from the battlefield on the day of battle. One is with the whole body: being undutiful to one's parents.

This can possibly be expanded on, or decreased, as hitting and punishing an orphan is a worse sin than consuming his wealth and property, Allāh knows best.

Section Three:

How the Levels in the Afterlife are Distributed to Good and Evil Works Committed in the Worldly Life

Know that people fluctuate in the Afterlife as they do in the worldly life and are divided into four categories: the destroyed (*hālīkīn*); the punished (*mu'adhabīn*); the saved (*nājīn*) and the successful (*fā'izīn*).

This is like when a king conquers a land and assumes authority over that region, some of the people he kills; some he punishes; some he leaves, these are the saved ones (*nājīn*) and some he rewards, these are the successful ones (*fā'izīn*).

If the king is just then he will not categorise them as such except with giving each their due. So he will not kill except the one who rejects his suitability for the monarchy who is stubborn against him regarding the basis of his authority; and he will not punish except the one who is deficient in his service of recognising the king; he does not leave except the one recognises his dominion and does not fall short in that regard and he does not reward except the one who devoted his life to the service and assistance of the king.

Each of these categories fluctuate in their favours and punishments based on their conditions and what testifies to this is what is relayed in the ḥadīth that some people will cross the bridge (*ṣirāṭ*) like sudden lightening [i.e. with speed]¹¹ and some will remain in the Hellfire for seven thousand years,¹² and there are many fluctuations between the instance and seven thousand years. As for the difference in the punishments, then it is just in terms of their severity, there is no end to the greatest punishment and the least punishment is via discussing one's account of deeds (*ḥisāb*). So just like a king could punish some who are deficient in their actions by discussing their account of actions and then pardon them, he could also execute and punish with other means.

The people of bliss (*ahlul-sa'āda*) fluctuate in the levels (*manāzil*) of bliss, these are universal matters which are known by transmission (*naql*) and the light of understanding (*nūr al-mar'ifa*).

As for the detailed aspect, then we can say that: all who implement the basis of faith (*aṣl al-īmān*), stay away from all major sins, perform all the obligations well, and have no minor sins which they commit continually, then the like of him can be pardoned as the Qur'ān mentions that staying away from major sins expiates minor sins.

Either such a person will be with 'those brought near [to Allāh]' (*muqarrabūn*) or with the 'Companions of the Right' (*aṣḥāb al-yamīn*) depending on his faith (*īmān*) and certainty (*yaqīn*). If it lessens or weakens then his rank will be lowered, and if it increases or strengthens, his rank goes up.

The *muqarrabūn* fluctuate [in their rank] depending on their knowl-

¹¹ Bukhārī, #7439; and Muslim, #302—from Abū Sa'īd (*radīy-Allāhu 'anhu*).

¹² Hāfiẓ al-'Irāqī stated in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.24: 'Reported by Tirmidhī in *Nawādir al-Uṣūl* from a ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy-Allāhu 'anhu*) with a weak chain of transmission.'

edge of Allāh and the levels (*darajāt*) of the gnostics (*ʿārifīn*) in terms of the knowledge [of Allāh] is unrestricted as the sea of knowledge [of Allāh] has no coast. The highest rank of the Companions of the right is the lowest level of the *muqarrabūn*—which is the condition of staying away from the major sins and performing the obligations.

As for those who commit major sins, or are negligent in performing the pillars of Islām, then if he repeats with a sincere repentance before death, then he will be included among those who did not commit major sins, because the one who is repentant from a sin is like one who has no sin, and the clean thobe is like a brand new thobe which has never ever been dirty.

As for the one who dies before repenting then his situation is precarious, as his death, while continuing in sin, could be a reason for his wavering faith and thus lead to an evil end, especially if his faith was out of *taqlīd* (blind following). He will be liable to degeneracy via the least amount of doubt if his belief was based on *taqlīd*. The knower who has certainty is the most distant from fearing an evil end. The punishment for the dead person who did not make *tawba* will be based on how vile the major sins committed were and the extent of the persistence with them.

What we have mentioned about the levels of the servants is a ruling which has apparent reasons like when a physician rules that the death of a sick person is inevitable and that the remedy will not be acceptable in his case. Yet with another sick person the symptoms are slight and the remedy therefore easy, this is the general assessment and this could result in his death if the physician does not perceive it. This is due to Allāh's secrets are hidden and souls of the living are obscure due to reasons connected to the Causer [i.e. Allāh] and it is not in the power of humans to comprehend it. Success and destruction in

the Afterlife has hidden reasons which are not within the capability of humans to comprehend. It is also allowed for the disobedient to be pardoned even if his sins were many, while the obedient could be shown anger if his outward acts of obedience were many as *taqwā* is important and that is in the heart, and matters of the heart can be hidden from a person then what about from others?

As for ‘the saved ones’ (*nājūn*), then we just mean by this ‘salvation’ safety, without happiness and success. They are, people who did not serve and get rewarded, they were no deficient enough to get punished—this condition resembles that of the insane, children of disbelievers to whom the *da‘wah* did not reach, and thus they had no understanding, rejection, obedience or disobedience—it is therefore appropriate that they be deemed as being from those on the Heights (*al-a‘rāf*).¹³

As for ‘the successful ones’ (*fā‘izūn*), then they are the gnostics (*ārifīn*), and ‘those brought near’ (*muqarrabūn*) and ‘those at the forefront’ (*sābiqūn*). They are those whom no soul knows what coolness for the eyes has been hidden for them. They are not eager for Paradise, rather they are eager to meet their Lord, glory unto Him, and see Him.¹⁴

They are like a lover, who when in his state of love, is heedless to his own self and does not sense what has affected his body as

¹³ Shaykh Mar‘ī al-Karamī al-Ḥanbalī authored a treatise entitled *Tahqīq ul-Khilāf fi Ashbāh al-A‘rāf*. There is a manuscript copy of it in Princeton University, no.1531.

[TN]: Shaykh Mar‘ī Ibn Yūsuf Ibn Abī Bakr Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Abī Bakr Ibn Yūsuf Ibn Aḥmad al-Karamī al-Maqdisī al-Ḥanbalī (*raḥimahullāh*). He was from Tūr ul-Karam/Tulkaram (Tulkarm) in Palestine (currently located in the northwest of the West Bank), then he moved to al-Quds and then to Cairo where he died in 1033 AH (1624 CE). He was praised as being a faqeeh by Ibn Badrān, Ibn Ḥumayd and ‘Uthmān Ibn Bishr. He authored a number of works some of which have been edited and published while the overwhelming majority of his works (over sixty titles) remain in manuscript form.

¹⁴ In regards to all of this refer to Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah’s book *al-‘Ubūdiyyah*.

he has no other concern than his beloved. Those are the ones who reach that which brings coolness to the eyes, and no human heart can comprehend it. This should suffice in explaining the distribution of the different levels of good deeds.

Section Four:

What Turns the Minor Sins into Major Sins

Know that the minor sins can become major with continuance and persistence.

In the ḥadīth reported by Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “There is no minor sin so long as it is persisted upon and there is no major sin so long as forgiveness from Allāh is sought.”¹⁵

Know that pardon from a major sin which has been committed, stopped and not followed up is better than pardon for a minor sin which the servant persists with.

It resembles successive drops which fall on a stone and affect the stone, yet if those drops all came down at once and covered the stone it would not have the same impact [as the gradual drops over time]. For this reason, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The most beloved acts to Allāh are the most constant and regular even if small.”¹⁶

One of the causes which lead to minor sins being tremendous are

¹⁵ Relayed by Sakhāwī in *al-Maqāṣid*, p.467, al-Zurqānī said in his *Mukhtaṣar*, p.203: “weak” as did al-Samhūdī in *al-Ghimāz*, p.155. See *Kashf ul-Khifā’*, vol.2, p.346; *Tamyyiz ut-Tayyib min al-Khabīth*, p.193 and *Asnā ul-Maṭālib*, p.250.

¹⁶ Bukhārī, vol.1, p.109; Muslim, #782; Abū Dāwūd, vol.1, p.315; Nasā’ī, vol.3, p.218—from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*).

when the minor sin is deemed as insignificant. Yet whenever a sin is deemed as tremendous with the servant [of Allāh] Allāh will deem it as small, and whenever a sin is deemed as small with the servant [of Allāh], Allāh will deem it as tremendous. If the servant of Allāh deems the sin as tremendous the heart will begin to flee from it and dislike it.

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: "The believer views sins as if he were at the foot of a mountain and fears that it will tumble down on him. While the sinner views sins as one does mere flies which land on his nose [which he flicks away easily]." Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.¹⁷

Sins are deemed hugely significant in the heart of a believer due to his knowledge of Allāh's Glory. If the magnitude of the One being disobeyed is reflected upon, he will view a minor sin as major.

In Bukhārī from the ḥadīth of Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*): "Indeed, you people commit actions that you view as smaller than a strand of hair, yet during the time of Allāh's Messenger we considered them as destructive sins."

Bilāl Ibn Sa'd (*raḥimabullāh*) said: "Do not look at the minuteness of the sin, rather look at the magnitude of the One you are disobeying."

Another cause of the minor sin turning great is to be joyous upon committing it, as a person may say "have you not seen how I defamed so and so and I mentioned his faults until he became ashamed? Have you not seen how I have fabricated false allegations against so and so? How I have deceived him and how I have overpowered him?" The likes of this worsen minor sins.

¹⁷ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.88

Another cause of the minor sin turning great is when one is unconcerned about Allāh's concealment [of the sin], and Allāh's forbearance with him, and the respite He granted. He does not comprehend that this may actually be a cause for him to commit more sins.

Also, when one commits a sin and exposes it by mentioning to others. In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "All of my *ummah* will be pardoned except for the open-sinners. Open-sinners involve a man committing a sin at night and then the next morning, after Allāh has covered him, goes and says to a person 'Yesterday I did such and such.' Allāh had covered him, then he goes and removes Allāh's covering from himself."¹⁸

Also if the sinner is a scholar who is followed, if his sin is displayed, it increases, such as if he wears silk, frequenting the company of oppressors, encouraging them by withholding report [of their sins], speaks about peoples honours and preoccupies himself with sciences which have no benefit except for reputation such as rhetorical argumentation. A scholar is followed in these sins, even when he dies his evil remains. So *tūba* [a tree in Paradise] is for the one who dies and his sins die along with him.

In the ḥadīth: "Whoever begins in Islām a bad sunnah will carry the burden of the sin of it and of whoever acts in accordance with it, without it detracting at all from their own burdens."¹⁹

A scholar has two obligations; first abandonment of sin and, sec-

¹⁸ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.405; and Muslim, #2990

¹⁹ Muslim, #1017; Nasā'ī, vol.5, pp.75, 76; Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.357, 360, 361, 362; Ibn Mājah, ḥadīth #203; Ḥumaydī, #805; and Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #2312, 2313—from Jarīr Ibn 'Abdu'llāh al-Bajālī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

only, concealment of it.

The burdens of scholars are increased if their sins are followed by others, likewise their good deeds increase if they are followed by others.

A scholar therefore has to be moderate in his clothing and spending, and be frugal as people look up to him.

He should also safeguard himself from what will be followed by others, as when he visits the rulers and gathers worldly pleasures, others will follow him in this. He may be assured of safety, yet others will not understand how he attained safety.

We reported that a king coerced people to eat pork and ham, a scholar came to him and the king's chamberlain said to him: 'We have slaughtered a young goat for you and saved you a portion of it to eat.' When the king entered the banquet he was given the goat yet did not eat it. The king then ordered that the scholar be executed and the chamberlain said to him: 'Did I not say to you that it is a young goat?' The scholar replied: 'How will those who follow me come to know that?'

Section Five:

The Conditions of Repentance

Know that repentance consists of regret (*nadm*) which leads to firm resolve (*azm*) and intent (*qasḍ*). Such regret leads to knowledge that disobedience is a wall between a person and his beloved [i.e. Allāh].

Regret (*nadm*) is to feel sorrow in the heart when feeling separated from his Beloved [Allāh], its indication is long grief and crying. Whoever feels an approaching punishment on one's son or one whom he

holds dear, his tears would flow and his calamity intensifies. What punishment is worse than that of the Hellfire? What reason causes the descent of punishment more than disobedience? What informer is more truthful than Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)? If a physician informed a person that his son will not be cured from a sickness, his grief will be more intense, yet his son is not dearer to him than his own self, and the physician is not more knowledgeable than Allāh and His Messenger; and death is not more intense than the Hellfire; and a sickness which causes death is not worse than disobedience which brings Allāh's Wrath and subjects one to the Hellfire.

The one who repents has to perform prayers which he missed or what he prayed without the correct conditions, as if he prayed them in a garment with impurity, or with an incorrect intention, due to his ignorance of that and he has to perform all that he missed.²⁰

Likewise, if he has any fasting to do, or *ṣakāt* to pay, or *hajj* to perform, or any other obligation—he must perform all of them.

As for disobedience—then he has to investigate when it first became apparent from him and look into it, whatever is between him and Allāh he must make *ṭawba* from it, be regretful and seek Allāh's forgiveness. He should also look into the amount of his sins and seek to do a good deed which is the same amount as it, he comes with good deeds which are the amount of his bad deeds, Allāh says

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

“Indeed, good deeds do away with evil deeds.”

[*Hūd* (11): 114]

²⁰ There is a difference of opinion on this among the scholars, for example refer to Imām Ibn Hazm al-Andalusī, *al-Muḥallā*, vol.2, p.235 and Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, *al-Ikhtiyārāt al-Fiqhiyyah*, pp.31-33.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Follow an evil action with a good action to erase it.”²¹

An example of what we have mentioned is: that listening to music should be expiated by listening to the Qur’ān and gatherings of remembrance (*dhikr*); touching the Qur’ān without being in a state of purity (*ṭahārah*)²² can be expiated by honouring the Qur’ān and reading it, and if possible to write out a Qur’ān. Drinking alcohol can be expiated by giving lawful drinks as charity—in these ways, the path of opposition [to sins] can be traversed as diseases are cured by opposing them, this is the ruling in regards to whatever is between him and Allāh.

As for acts of oppression among the servants [of Allāh] then these also contain disobedience to Allāh, as Allāh has forbidden his servants from being oppressed. The one who oppresses them has commit something which Allāh has forbidden. This therefore has to be dealt with by regret, firm resolve to give up this oppression in future, come with good deeds which oppose such acts of oppression. Harming people is expiated by doing good to people; usurping wealth and property is faced with giving charity with lawful wealth; defaming people’s honours is expiated with praising the people of religion and murder is to be expiated with freeing a slave.

People oppress others via their lives, wealth and property, honour or harming their hearts.

As for the first [life], if he commits manslaughter he has to pay the

²¹ Tirmidhī, #1988; Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.153, 158—from the ḥadīth of Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), graded ḥasan.

²² There is a difference of opinion among the Scholars on the issue of touching the Mus-haf while not being in a state of purity, refer to Ibn Hazm, *al-Muḥalla*, vol.1, p.77; Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, vol.1, p.68; Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, vol.4, p.1737.

blood money to those who rightfully deserve it, he pays or his *‘āqilah* pays for it.²³ If he committed premeditated murder with intent then *qisās* (the law of equality) has to be implemented with its conditions, so he has to hand himself in to the one whom has lost the relative, and if he wills he has him punished (under the law) or if he wills he pardons him. It is not allowed for him to hide his affair contrary to the one who commits illegal sexual intercourse, theft, drinking of alcohol or does anything else which necessitates the implementation of Allāh’s *ḥadd*.

Tawba does not necessitate that he expose himself, rather he must cover himself. If his case is referred to the leader in authority who established the *ḥadd* on him then this occurs and his *tawba* is still correct and accepted by Allāh, the proof of this is the story of Mā’iz and the Ghāmidī woman.²⁴

²³ In the *fiqh* of blood money the *‘āqilah* refers to the family and tribe, on the maternal side, of the one who committed the accidental death or manslaughter and they cooperate to pay the blood money.

²⁴ Muslim, #1694; Abū Dāwūd, #4432 and #4433 from Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

As reported by Muslim from Buraydah al-Aslamī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Ma’iz ibn Malik came to Allāh’s Prophet (ﷺ) and said to him: ‘O Messenger of Allāh! purify me.’ Thereupon the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Woe is upon you, go back and ask forgiveness of Allāh and turn to Him in repentance.” He (the narrator) said that he went off a little way, then came and said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh! purify me.’ The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Woe is upon you, go back and ask forgiveness of Allāh and turn to Him in repentance.” He (the narrator) said that he went off a little way, then he came and said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh! purify me.’ Allāh’s Prophet (ﷺ) said as he had said before. When it was the fourth time, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “From what am I to purify you?” He said: From adultery. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) asked, “Is he insane.” He was informed that he was not insane. He (ﷺ) said: “Has he drunk alcohol?” someone stood up and smelt his breath but noticed no smell of alcohol. Thereupon Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Have you committed adultery?” He said: Yes. He made a pronouncement about him and he was stoned. The people then (divided) into two groups about him (Ma’iz). One of them said: ‘He has been destroyed for his sins have encompassed him, whereas the other group said: ‘There is no repentance more excellent than the repentance of Ma’iz, for he came to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and placed his hand upon (the Prophets) hand and then said: ‘Kill me with the stones.’ This

=

Likewise, in cases of slander (*qadhf*) there has to be a ruling for those who rightfully deserve justice.

As for the second: then this is transgressions related to wealth and property (*ammāl*) such as usurpation, treachery, deceptive business dealings and so forth—in such cases anything taken without right has to be returned.

=

(controversy about Ma'iz) remained for two or three days. Then came Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) to them (his Companions) as they were sitting. He greeted them with a salutation and then sat down and said: "Ask forgiveness for Ma'iz Ibn Mālik."

They said: May Allāh forgive Ma'iz Ibn Mālik. Thereupon Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "He has made such a repentance that if that were to be divided among a community it would have been enough for all of them."

He (the narrator) said: Then a woman of Ghamid, a branch of Azd, came to him and said: 'O Messenger of Allāh!, purify me.' Thereupon he (ﷺ) said: "Woe to you go back and beg forgiveness from Allāh and turn to Him in repentance." She said: 'I find that you intend to send me back as you sent back Ma'iz Ibn Mālik.' He (ﷺ) said: "What has happened to you?" She said that she had become pregnant as a result of adultery. He (ﷺ) said: "Is it you (who has done that)?" She said: 'Yes.' He (ﷺ) said to her: "(You will not be punished) until you give birth to that which is there in your womb."

One of the Anṣār became responsible for her until she delivered (the child). He (that Ansari) came to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and said: 'The woman of Ghamid has given birth (to a child).' He (ﷺ) said: "In that case we shall not stone her and leave her infant with none to breast-feed him." One of the Anṣār got up and said: 'Allāh's Messenger let the responsibility of his nursing be upon me. She was then stoned to death.'

Muslim has narrated the ḥadīth from another chain of transmission with slight variation, 'That Ma'iz Ibn Mālik al-Aslamī came to the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: 'O Allāh's Messenger I have wronged my self and have committed adultery and I want to be purified from my sin, the Prophet (ﷺ) returned him back. Next day again he came to the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: 'O Allāh's Messenger! I have committed adultery, the Prophet (ﷺ) again returned him back.' Thereupon, the Prophet (ﷺ) sent a man to his tribe saying: "Do you know anything wrong with his mind, or disproved anything of him?" They replied: 'We do not know of him except that he is sound in mind, and that he is from our pious, as far as we know.' He then came a third time to the Prophet (ﷺ) asking the same question. The Prophet (ﷺ) again sent a man to his tribe asking about him, but they answered the same. And when, he came the fourth time, a pit was dug for him (in the ground) Then the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered that he be stoned.

The narrator of the ḥadīth said: 'After, al-Ghamidiyah came to Prophet (ﷺ) saying: 'O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) I also have committed adultery so please purify me from my sin', the Prophet (ﷺ) returned her back. Then next day she came and said to the Prophet (ﷺ): 'O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) why you return me (back)? Perhaps you want to return me (back) as you returned Ma'iz, by Allāh I am pregnant.' The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: "Go till you give birth to baby."

He should write to the people who have been transgressed against so as to give their rights back to them and he seeks to revolve matters with them. If his oppression is much, in that he is unable to return it all, then he does what he is able. If he has no other way except to increase his good deeds, then it will be taken from him via *qisās* on the Day of Judgement and it will be placed on the scales of those oppressed, if this is insufficient he will take their evil deeds placed above his own.

This is the firm ruling regarding acts of oppression connected to protection and wealth and property. If he still has any of the wealth and property and he does not know the owners of it, or the rightful inheritors, he gives it away in charity. If the lawful is mixed with the forbidden he strives to work out the amount of *ḥaram* and he gives the like of it in charity.

Third: crimes against honour and harming hearts, in this case a person has to seek amends from all whom he defamed and let them know the extent of the crime, without ambiguity. Yet it may be the case that if he makes this known he has presented himself to problems so that those crimes, if mentioned, cause more harm. As in the case if his being censured for hiding his fault, or like committing illegal sexual intercourse with his neighbours wife. He strives to have forbearance with the one whom he dishonoured and to be good to the person and he makes amends ambiguously. This is so that his sin of dishonour will be overcome by good deeds on the Day of Judgement. Likewise, whoever dies his affair has expired and he only has left his large amount of good deeds which will be taken from him as compensation on the Day of Judgement and there is no salvation from the Fire except via the ascendancy of good deeds [outweighing the sin].

Section Six:

The Prerequisites of Repentance

Of the prerequisites of true repentance is firm and sure resolve (*azm*) to not to repeat such sins nor their like. A parable in this regards is with a sick person who knows that a particular fruit harms his health and thus takes firm and decisive resolve to not eat it as it affects its sickness. This firm resolve is realised straightaway even though it can also be imagined that desire can overcome at other times. He will not be repentant so long as he does not make his resolve firm straightaway, and that cannot be imagined for the repentant person at the beginning except by solitude and silence, sleeping little, eating little, and having a lawful means of earning, and by abandoning doubts and desires in food and clothing.

Some of them said: "Whoever is truthful in abandoning desires, and strives with himself for seven years will not be tried by them again." While another of them said: "Whoever repents from sin and becomes upright for seven years, will not go back to them."

Section Seven:

Types of People Who are in Continual Repentance

In regards to *tawba*, people are of four levels:

The first category: The repentant one who is upright in *tawba* up till the end of his life and does not exhort himself to return to his sin except for slips which no human is free of. This is being upright in *tawbah* and such a person is at the forefront of goodness.

This type of repentance is known as 'a sincere repentance' (*tawba al-nusūbah*) and such a soul is referred to as being 'the contented soul' (*nafs ul-mutma'innah*). They differ, of them are those who place their desires under the power of knowledge and of them are those whose

souls attempt to pull them and they are thus filled with struggling against the soul.

The second category: The repentant one who traverses the path of steadfastness in most of the acts of obedience and major immoral sins, because he is not free of sins, not intentionally, however he is tested by them without setting out decisively to commit them. Whenever he commits them he blames his soul, regrets and seeks to safeguard himself from the means for falling in to them. This is the 'the self-reproaching soul' (*nafs ul-lawwāma*) which blames the soul for censured conditions. This is also a lofty level, even though lesser than the first level, it is the condition of most of those who repent because evil is etched into human nature and thus rarely free from a person, though the objective of his striving is for his good to overcome his evil in order for his scales to be weighty [on the Day of Judgement] with more good deeds. But it is extremely rare that the balance of evil deeds would be completely empty, this is distant [from being attained]. This category has a good promise from Allāh when He said:

الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبِيرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
وَسِيعُ الْمَعْفُورِ

"Those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, only [committing] slight ones. Indeed, your Lord is vast in forgiveness."

[*al-Najm* (53): 32]²⁵

²⁵ [TN]: In the *tafsir* of Jalālayn, it is explained '*lamam*' as: "minor sins, such as looking, kissing and touching." Ibn Kathīr stated in his *tafsir* of the *ayah*: '*Lamam*' means small faults and minor errors. Imām Aḥmad reported that Ibn 'Abbās said: I have not seen anything that resembles *al-Lamam* better than the ḥadīth that Abū Hurayrah narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ): "Indeed, Allāh, the Exalted, has decreed for the Son of Adam his share of *ẓinā* and he will certainly earn his share. The *ẓinā* of the eye is by looking, the *ẓinā* of the tongue is by talking and the heart wishes and lusts, but the sexual organ either substantiates all this or not." This ḥadīth is recorded in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs. Ibn Jarīr recorded that Ibn Mas'ūd said: "The eyes commit *ẓinā* by looking, the lips by kissing, the hands by transgressing, the feet

This level is indicated in the Prophet's (ﷺ) saying "Allāh loves the astute repentant believer."²⁶

The third category: Those who repent and then continue upon steadfastness for a while and then his desires for some sins overcome him and he commits them due to being unable to suppress his desires. Yet with this, he perseveres with actions of obedience and leaves most sins despite being able to commit them and despite desiring to commit them. It is just that one or two of his desires overcome him, if Allāh willed it for him to suppress them, he would and thus end the vile which he is committing, and when it is over he regrets and he exhorts himself to repent from that sin. This is the 'the responsible soul' (*nafs al-mas'ūlah*), about which Allāh said:

=

by walking, and the sexual organ either materializes all of this or not. When one commits sexual intercourse, he will be someone who committed *zinā*. Otherwise, it is *al-Lamam*." Masrūq and al-Sha'bī also held the same view. 'Abdu'l-Rahman Ibn Nafi', who is also known as Ibn Lubābah al-Ta'ifi, said: "I asked Abū Hurayrah about Allāh's statement, "... except the *Lamam*..."

and he said, "It pertains to kissing, winking, looking and embracing. When the sexual organ meets the sexual organ in intercourse then *ghusl* is obligatory, and that is *zinā*."

Al-Qurtubī mentions in his *tafsir* of the *ayah*: *Al-Lamam*, are minor sins which none are safe from falling into except those whom Allāh protects and preserves. There is difference of opinion over its meaning and Abū Hurayrah, Ibn 'Abbās and al-Sha'bī said that it is everything less than *zinā*. Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān said that the *ayah* was revealed in regards to a man called Nabhān al-Tammār who had a shop selling dates and one day a woman came to the shop to buy some dates. The man said to her "if you come inside into the back there are even better types here." When she went in he tried to seduce her but she rejected and left. Nabhān was regretful for what he had done so he went to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) asking about the condition who does everything except for *zinā* with a woman whose husband had left to do battle. Then the *ayah* was revealed. This is also mentioned in the end of *Sūrah Hūd*, and Ibn Mas'ūd, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī, Hudhayfah and Masrūq said that "*lamam* is less than sexual intercourse, such as kissing, cuddling, looking and laying down".

²⁶ Reported by 'Abdu'llāh Ibn Aḥmad, *Zawā'id ul-Musnad*, vol.1, pp.80, p.103 via the route of Abū Nu'aym in *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā*, vol.3, p.178 from 'Alī and 'Amr al-Bajalī is in the chain of transmission. Ibn Ḥabbān stated about al-Bajalī "it is not permitted to utilise him". 'Abdu'l-Malik ibn Sufyān al-Thaqafī stated "*majhūl*" and al-Ḥaythamī deemed him as weak in *Majma' ul-Zawā'id*, vol.10, p.200 as did al-'Irāqī in *Takhrīj ul-Awliyā*, vol.4, p.44.

وَأَخْرُونَ أَعْرَفُوا بِذُنُوبِهِمْ خَلَطُوا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا
وَأَخْرَسَيْنَا

“And [there are] others who have acknowledged their sins. They had mixed a righteous deed with another that was bad.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 102]

On account of his diligence in obedience and his aversion to the sins he perpetrates, his case is hopeful:

عَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾

“...Perhaps Allāh will turn unto them (in mercy)...”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 102]

His end is dangerous due to his delaying and procrastination as he could die before making *tawba* and actions are by their end. All souls are prone to die so souls have to be careful and observant and be cautioned against falling into prohibitions.

The fourth category: Those who repent and were steadfast for a while and then they return to sin without exhorting themselves to repent and without feeling sorrow for their actions, they persist in sin. This is the ‘the soul which instructs evil’ (*nafs al-ammārah bi’s-sū*). An evil end is feared for this type.

If he dies upon *tawhid*, it is hoped that he will be saved from the Fire even if after a while. It is not impossible for Allāh to pardon him due to a hidden reason which is not known, however it is inappropriate for a sinner to merely rely on this for there are those who say “Indeed, Allāh is Kind, His treasures are vast and my disobedience does not harm Him”. Yet you see the one who says this embarking on the seas to seek money and if it was said to him “if Allāh is Kind, as

you say, why do you not just sit at home as Allāh will perhaps provide for you?” He will say in response: “Provisions have to be earned!” Then it should be said to him: “and likewise salvation is by *tawba*!”

Section eight:

What the Repentant Person Should Do

We mentioned that the one who repents has to do good deeds which are contrary to the evil actions he has done so as to wipe them out. Good deeds which expiate [bad deeds] can be with the heart, tongue and limbs. Via the heart involves humility; via the tongue: one should confess the offence and ask for forgiveness by saying, “My Lord, I have wronged myself, forgive me.”

It is narrated in a ḥadīth the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There is no man who commits a sin, makes ablution properly, prays two units of prayer and then seeks Allāh’s forgiveness, except that he will be forgiven.”²⁷

As for with the limbs—then it is by acts of obedience, giving charity and different types of acts of worship.

Section nine:

Repentance as a Remedy and the Way to Break the Habit of Sin

Know that whoever does not find a remedy is the one who does not find the sickness, as a remedy has no meaning except that it works contrary to the sickness and a thing does not invalidate anything except by working against it. The reason for persistence [in sin] is

²⁷ Aḥmad, *Musnad*, vol.1, pp.2, 10; Marwazī, *Musnad Abi Bakr*, pp.9-11; Ṭayālīsī, p.2; Tirmidhī, ḥadīth #406, #3009; Ibn Jarīr, #7853, #7854; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2454; Baghawī, #1015—from Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and with ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

heedlessness and desire, and heedlessness is not opposed except with knowledge. Desire is not opposed except with patience on cutting off the reasons which incite desires.

Heedlessness (*ghafla*) is at the head of sin and has no remedy except for *tawba* which involves the sweetness of knowledge blended with the bitterness of patience just as lemonade (*sekanjabīn*)²⁸ is blended with the sweetness of sugar and the bitterness of vinegar, and when combined suppresses jaundice (*ṣafrāʾ*). The physicians for this sickness are the scholars as the sickness is in the heart and soul more than it is in the physical body. Such a disease increases with:

Firstly: the sick person not knowing that he is sick

Secondly: his final end is unknown in this life, as opposed to bodily sicknesses in which death from them is witnessed as natural, yet what awaits after death is not witnessed. Thus, his aversion from sins if known by the one who commits them is weak and you thus see him merely rely on Allāh's virtue for sicknesses of the heart, and he strives to cure the body without trusting just on Allāh.

Thirdly: the incurable disease, which is the loss of the physicians, who are the scholars. They have become sick during these times as a destructive disease is love of the world and this sickness can overcome physicians. They are unable to caution the creation against it as they fear that it will be said to them "why do you instruct people to treat themselves yet you forget your own selves?" This is a reason for the sickness to spread and for the remedy to fail.

If it is asked: "What is incumbent for the admonisher to traverse?"

The answer is: this is lengthy, however we will indicate beneficial actions and there are four relevant ones here:

²⁸ [TN]: also known as Shikanajabeen in the Indian sub-continent, it was a sweet and sour syrup which has its roots in Persia. Its name is derived from 'Serkeh' [vinegar] and 'Anjabeen' [sweet honey]. It is usually served during summer.

The first is to mention the verses in the Qur'ān which incite fear in the hearts of the sinful ones; and also mentioning what has similarly been relayed in the reports and aḥādīth; along with the praise of those who repented.

The second type is the stories of the Prophets (*'alayhum-salām*) and the *salaf us-ṣāliḥ*, and the calamities which befell them due to sins. As in the case of Ādam (*'alayhis-salām*) and how his disobedience led him to be expelled from Paradise; and what happened with Dāwūd, Sulaymān and Yūsuf, and what the similar other lessons which the Qur'ān mentions. Their happiness was in treating that and as the punishment of the Afterlife is more intense this has to be oft-repeated for the benefit of those who persist, as it benefits in encouraging *tawba*.

The third type is that they acknowledge that the immediate punishment in this life is to be expected, as all calamities which afflict the servant in this life are due to his sins. A servant may not be bothered about the punishment in the Afterlife but they are fearful of the punishment in the worldly life moreso due to ignorance. The consequence of sins could be hastened in the worldly life, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A servant could be prevented from provision due to a sin he commits.”²⁹

Fuḍayl ibn 'Iyāḍ said: “When I disobey Allāh, I know this in the manners of my donkey and servant.”

Abū Sulaymān al-Darāmī stated: “Dreaming is a punishment, and the prayer in congregation does not surpass anyone except the sin which he commits.”

²⁹ Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.277, 280, 282; ibn Ḥibbān, #1090; Ḥākim, vol.1, p.493; Ibn Mājah, #4022; al-Taḥāwī, *Musḥkil ul-Āthār*, vol.4, p.169; Abū Nu'aym, *Akḥbār Asbabān*, vol.2, p.60; Ibn ul-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd*, p.86; Baghawī, *Sharḥ us-Sunnah*, #3418; al-Qadā'ī, *Musnad al-Shibāb*, #1001—from Thawbān (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*). In the isnād is some jahālah and also severance as explained by Shaykh, al-'Allāmah Muḥammad Nāṣiruddīn al-Albānī in *Silsilah Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #154.

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “If a believer commits a sin, a black mark is etched in his heart. If he repents, desists from it and seeks Allāh’s forgiveness his heart will be purified and this is the stain (*rān*) which Allāh mentioned in His Book when he said:

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

“No! Rather, the stain (*rān*) has covered their hearts of that which they were earning.”

[*al-Mutaffifin* (83): 14]”

Tirmidhī said “the ḥadīth is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.”³⁰ Al-Ḥasan said: “A good deed is light in the heart and strength in the body. Bad deeds are transgression in the heart and weakness in the body.”

The fourth type is [for the preacher] to mention the punishments for a sin, such as for drinking alcohol, murder, envy and backbiting.

He should be a physician who knows the sickness and at the same time knows how to extract the remedy.

A man asked the Prophet (ﷺ): “Advise me.” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: “Do not get angry.”³¹ Another man asked the Prophet (ﷺ): “Please advise me.” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: “Upon you is to despair with what the people have in their hands.”³²

³⁰ Tirmidhī, #3331; Ibn Mājah, #4244; Aḥmad, *Musnad*, vol.2, p.297; Ibn Ḥibbān, #1771; Ḥākim, vol.2, p.517—the isnād is ḥasan. Suyūṭī relayed it in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol.6, p.325 and ascribed it to Ibn Jarīr, ‘Abd Ibn Ḥumayd, Ibn ul-Mundhir, Ibn Mardawayh and al-Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab ul-Imān*.

³¹ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.431; Tirmidhī, #3021 and Aḥmad, vol.2, pp.175, 362.

³² Reported by Ḥākim from Sa’d (there is a difference as to who he is); al-Ruwayānī in his *Musnad* and in the isnād is Muḥammad Ibn Ḥumayd and there is agreement that he is weak, refer to *Fayd ul-Qadīr*, vol.4, p.329 and *al-Iṣābah*, vol.4, p.181 and *Da‘if al-Jāmi‘*, #3742.

It was as if in the first case the Prophet (ﷺ) saw an angry nature from the man, and in the second, greed. What we mentioned here is the remedy for the heedless, so not what remains to be explained is the remedy for desires and the way to treat it.

We mentioned in the ‘Chapter on Disciplining the Soul’ (*riyādat ul-naḥḥ*)³³ that patience is a given for the sick are only continually sick due to always doing that which harms him. His intense desire is what leads him to that or to his heedlessness about what harms him. Thus, the bitterness of patience. Likewise, he treats his desires for disobedience, like a youth for example whose desire overcomes him—he becomes unable to preserve his eyes, heart and limbs in following desires. Thus, it becomes appropriate to constantly mention the verses found in Allāh’s Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger which arouse fear. If his fear intensifies he becomes more distant from causes which instil desire.

That which incites desire from outside is its remedy: hunger and constant fasting, which are perfected with patience and there is no patience except with fear, yet there is no fear except with knowledge and he does not know except with insight. The first thing is to attend the gatherings of remembrance (*dhikr*) and listen with a heart which is free from preoccupations. Then there has to be reflection on what is said [in the gatherings] which will instil revival (*inbi’āth*) and make patience easy along with seeking the remedy, Allāh grating success is behind all of that.

If it is said: “What is the condition of a person who falls into sin with the knowledge of its vile consequences?” The answer is: “the promised consequence is not extant currently.”

Another answer is that: “The believer, if he falls into sin, has to make

³³ Refer to the book in this series, ‘*Discipline-The Path to Spiritual Growth*’ published by Dār as-Sunnah Publisher, Birmingham, U.K, 2019.

firm resolve to repent as he is promised that *tawba* annuls what was done prior. However, having long and far-reaching hopes dominate human nature so he still procrastinates regarding *tawba*, when he hopes to repent he commits a sin.”

Another answer is: “He hopes for Allāh’s pardon and the remedy for these causes is that he reflects in himself on all that has done recently and that he is not safe from the approach of death. He treats procrastination by reflecting on the screams of the people of Hellfire regarding their procrastination, as the one who procrastinates bases his hope on what he does not have—which is remaining alive. Perhaps he will not remain alive [and die soon], and if he does remain alive then perhaps he will be unable to stop tomorrow as he can today. His inability to avoid sins is behind his desires getting the better of him and will not depart from him tomorrow. Rather he is assured of going back to sin, and from here the people of procrastination are destroyed, as they think that before.

The person who procrastinates is like a one who wants to cut down a tree and sees that it is strong and will not be chopped down except with severe difficulty and says “I will delay it for a year and then come back,” yet he does not know that the tree whenever it is left its roots strengthen, yet when his life lengthens he increases in weakness. It is strange when one, though strong, is unable to resist when weak how can he wait for dominance if he has weakened and it has strengthened. As for waiting for Allāh’s Pardon, then Allāh’s Pardon is possible yet a person has to be resolute. This is like a man who speaks out all of his wealth for charity yet neglects himself and his family waiting for Allāh to provide treasure for him direct in his pocket. This is possible, yet such a person would be acting foolishly, and Allāh knows best.

THE SECOND FOUNDATION

On Patience and Thankfulness

(*al-ṣabr wa'l-shukr*)

It comprises of two parts: The first part include an exposition of the merits, the nature and the divisions of patience (*ṣabr*). Allāh has mentioned patience in the Qur'ān in some ninety odd instances, and has attributed most of the stages (*darajāt*) and the rewards (*khayrāt*) to patience, making them its fruits. Allāh said:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوا

“We appointed from among them leaders who guide by Our command, when they endured patiently.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32): 24]

And He has said,

وَقَمَّتْ
كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا

“And perfectly was fulfilled the most fair word of your Lord upon the Children of Israel, for they endured patiently.”

[*al-A'rāf* (7): 137]

Again,

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

“Surely We shall recompense those who were patient with their reward, according to the best of what they did.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 96]

And He has said,

إِنَّمَا يُوفَى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿١٠﴾

“Surely the patient shall be given their reward in full without reckoning.”

[*al-Zumar* (38): 10]

For each action bringing us close [to Allāh] has its reward according to a fixed measure and calculation, with the exception of patience. It is because fasting pertains to patience, that Allāh said “Fasting is for Me and I will reward for it.”¹

Allāh has promised the patient that He will be with them, and brought together for the patient that which He did not gather for others. Allāh has said,

أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ
هُمْ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

“Upon these rest blessings and mercy from their Lord, and they are truly guided.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 157]

The verses on this are numerous, as for the traditions then in the

¹ Bukhārī, vol.4, p.88; Muslim, #1151; Mālik, *Muwattaʿa*, vol.1, p.310; Abū Dāwūd, #2363; Tirmidhī, #764; Nasāʾī, vol.4, p.162—from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*), and also from other Companions.

Two Ṣaḥīḥs is the ḥadīth from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “No one has been given a gift better and more vast than patience.”² In another ḥadīth: “Patience in *īmān* has the level of the head to a body.”³

Al-Ḥasan said: “Patience is a treasure from the treasures of goodness. Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, does not give it except to a kind servant.”

Some of the gnostics used to carry in their pockets a piece of paper which they would bring out to read every hour and on it would be written:

وَأَصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا

“And be patient under the judgement of your Lord: surely you are before Our eyes.”

[*al-Tūr* (52): 48]

Know for patience is a characteristic of mankind, and it cannot be imagined that animals will possess it due to their deficiency [in intellect] and they are governed by their appetites (*shahawāt*), which dominate them. Patience is also inconceivable with the angels due to their perfection for they have been made so as to long for the Lordly Presence (*ḥaḍrat al-rubūbiyya*), appetites do not overcome them which avert them from the Presence of Majesty (*ḥaḍrat al-jalāl*); and thus they are in no need of anything to divert them from this.

As for mankind, then they have been created in infancy deficient

² Bukhārī, vol.3, p.265; Muslim, #1053; Mālik, *Muwattaʿa*, vol.2, p.997; Abū Dāwūd, #1644; Tirmidhī, #2025; Nasāʾī, vol.5, p.95—from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*).

³ Reported by Daylamī, *Musnad ul-Firdaws* from Anas (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*), it contains Yazīd al-Raqashī in the isnād and he is a weak narrator; also reported in a mawqūf form up to ʿAlī in al-Bayhaqī, *Shuʿab ul-Īmān*, also in *Ithāf al-sāda al-Muttaqin*, vol.9, p.7.

like animals, they only have the appetite for the nourishment which they need. Then the appetite for amusement, and then that of adornment, and then the appetite for sexual relations and he does not have the strength to be patient. If the intellect as active and strengthens the initial stages of beams of the light of guidance emerge at the age when right from wrong can be distinguished and this develops up until puberty, just as the light of dawn begins until the disc of the sun comes up. However, this is a restricted guidance which has no guide to the benefits of the Afterlife, yet if it is connected with understanding of the Divine Legislation it can get a glimpse of what is connected to the Afterlife and its benefits increase even though the natural disposition inclines to what it loves.

The Divine Legislation is the motive, yet the intellect prevents it, so there is warfare between the two and the battlefield is the servant's heart. Patience therefore, is an expression of a firm religious motive to challenge the motive of desires. If he is steadfast until he overcomes desires he is included among the patient ones (*ṣābirīn*). If however he weakens, in that desires overcome him and he was not patient in repelling them, he is included among the followers of the devils. If it is corroborated that patience is an expression of a firm religious motive to challenge the motive of desire, this resistance of the special characteristics of human beings.

Section One:

The Divisions of Patience

Know that patience is of two kinds: One is physical (*badanī*), such as bearing the difficulties of the body and enduring them with constancy when doing actions of worship (*ʿibādāt*) or other acts. The second is inner patience (*ṣabr naḥsī*) and it applies to vain whims and desires. When this kind of patience is related to being patient with the desires

of the stomach and private parts it is called ‘chastity’ (*‘iffa*); when it is related to patience in fighting, it is called ‘bravery’ (*shajā‘a*); when it is related to withholding anger (*ghayṣ*), it is called ‘forbearance’ (*hilm*); when it is related to tiresome pursuits it is called ‘understanding’ (*si‘at al-ṣadr*); When it is related to hiding a matter, it is called ‘concealing secrets’ (*kitmān al-sirr*). When related to simple living, it is called ‘asceticism’ (*zuhd*); when patience means living in proportion to the small amounts of fortune, it is called ‘contentment’ (*qanā‘a*).

As for misfortune, then the name ‘patience’ (*ṣabr*) alone is used. What we have mentioned therefore shows that most of the characteristics of *īmān* are found within patience, even if the names differ with different related factors.

Know that the servant will not be sufficed from patience at all times, as everything that the servant meets in the worldly life must covers two types of matters:

1- The first kind is that which is in harmony with his desires (*hawā*): such as good health, safety, wealth and property, reputation, a large family, followers, and all the pleasures of this world—the servant needs patience for all of these matters, yet he should neither rely on them nor does he fall sway to overindulgence. He has to maintain Allāh’s rights in regards to his wealth by spending out of it for the sake of Allāh and also with his body by helping out others.

If he does not control himself from overindulgence in them he will be led to belittlement and transgression, to the extent that some of the gnostics said: ‘The believer is patient with misfortune (*balā*), but only the sincerely truthful is patient with prosperity (*‘affīya*).’

‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Awf (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “We were tested with hardship and we were patient, and then we were tried with ease

and we were not patient.”

For this reason, Allāh said:

لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ

“O believers, let neither your possessions, nor your children divert you from Allāh’s remembrance.”

[*al-Munāfiqūn* (63): 9]

And He said:

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ أَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَوْلَادَكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ

“And know Your wealth and your children are a trial.”

[*al-Anfāl* (8): 28]

He said:

بَعْضُ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ عَدَاؤُكُمْ فَأَحْذَرُوهُمْ

“O believers, some of your wives and children are an enemy to you; so beware of them.”

[*al-Taghābun* (64): 14]

The true man is the one who is patience with prosperity (*‘āffīya*), this type of patience is connected to thankfulness and is not perfected except with establishing the right of thankfulness. Patience with prosperity is difficult as it is connected to one’s ability. A hungry man is better able to endure his hunger when food is not available than when delicious food is presented to him.

Second Type: Three Ways of Opposing Desire

The first type is obedience (*tā'āt*), and the servant needs to be **patient** in practicing them, as the soul (*nafs*) by its nature flees from **servitude** to Allāh (*'ubūdīyya*).

The servant also has to be patient in fulfilling acts of worship which **he** dislikes due to laziness (*kasl*), such as prayer (*ṣalāt*), and those he **dislikes** because of stinginess (*bukhl*), such as almsgiving (*ṣakāt*), **and** those he dislikes because of them both, such as the pilgrimage (*hajj*) and struggling in the way of Allāh (*jihād*). He who is obedient requires patience in his obedience at three stages:

1. The first [stage] precedes acts of worship, which is to correct one's intention (*niyya*), have sincerity and patience with the traps of showing off (*riyā'*).
2. The second [stage] is within the act of worship itself, he should not be heedless to Allāh or disregard ascertaining the proper conduct (*ādāb*) and custom (*sunan*). He should have patience from the beginning to the end of the action (*'amal*).
3. The third [stage] follows the completion of the action, patience with performing them and with manifesting actions due to showing off and reputation (*sum'a*), and patience with everything that can nullify action. Whoever cannot be patient with *al-mann* [the desire to be mentioned] and harm after giving charity (*sadaqa*) will invalidate it.

The second type is patience with disobedience (*ma'āsī*), and how much the servant is in need of this.

Furthermore, if a particular act is easy to perform, such as disobedience with the tongue by backbiting, lying, argumentation and the likes, patience with them is hard. For you see a man wearing silk and slanders people all day long and this conduct is not disapproved.

Whoever cannot control his tongue in discussions and is unable to be patient, then nothing can aid him, except for seclusion (*uṣṭā*).

The third type relates to [matters] over which [one] has no choice at all. Misfortunes like the death of a loved one, the loss of wealth, the loss of eyesight, loss of good health and all other kinds of tribulation. Patience in these [misfortunes] is one of the highest stations (*maqāmāt*) of patience as it instils certainty (*yaqīn*).

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Whoever Allāh wishes good for, He tries him."⁴

Patience with the harm of people is of the highest levels (*a'lā al-marātib*), Allāh said:

وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ

"But if you are patient and God-fearing, surely that is true constancy."

[*Āl-Imrān* (3): 186]

He said:

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ

"We know indeed how your heart is distressed by what they say."

[*al-Hijr* (15): 97]

And He said:

وَلَيْنَ صَبْرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصَّابِرِينَ

"But if you can bear such conduct with patience, indeed that is best for the steadfast."

[*al-Nahl* (16): 126]

⁴ Bukhārī, #5645; Aḥmad, #7234; Mālik, vol.2, p.229; Nasā'ī, *al-Kubrā*; *Tuhfat al-Asbrāf*, vol.10, p.77; al-Qadā'ī, *Musnad ul-Shibāb*, #344; al-Baghawī, #1420—from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

It was reported from that Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “Patience is with three: patience with a misfortune; patience with obedience and patience with disobedience. Whoever is patient with a misfortune until he repels it with the best of ways, Allāh will decree three hundred levels for him the distance between each level is like that between the heaven and the earth. Whoever is patient with obedience will have six hundred levels written for him between each level will be like the distance between the earth and the Throne. Whoever is patient with disobedience will have none hundred levels written for him between each level will be like the distance between the earth and the Throne twice over.”⁵

The aḥādīth from the Prophet (ﷺ) about the merits of patience are many, such as: what has been reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from ‘Ā’ishah (*radi Allāhu ‘anhā*) who said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “There is no misfortune which befalls a Muslim except that by it Allāh expiates [sin] from him, even a thorn which pricks him.”’⁶

In another ḥadīth: “There is no Muslim afflicted by a misfortune, illness, hunger, tiredness, grief, harm or concern except that by it Allāh expiates his sins.” Relayed in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁷ In another ḥadīth: “A misfortune does not cease to befall a Muslim man or woman in his or her body, wealth, property or children except that they will meet Allāh with no sins.”⁸ In the ḥadīth of Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (*radiy Allāhu ‘anhū*) who said: I said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger, which people are tested the most?’ He replied (ﷺ): “The Prophets, then the righteous, then those people most like them, then those people most like them. A man is tested based on his religion, if his religion is strong the test is

⁵ Reported by Ibn Abī Dunyā, *Faḍl us-Ṣabr*, Abū’l-Shaykh, *al-Thawāb*, Daylamī, *al-Firdaws*—from ‘Alī. It is fabricated, refer to *Fayḍ ul-Qadīr*, vol.4, p.235.

⁶ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.89; Muslim, #2572

⁷ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.91; Muslim, #2573 and Tirmidhī, #966.

⁸ Reported by Aḥmad, vol.2, p.287, 450; Tirmidhī, #2401; Hākim, vol.1, p.346; al-Baghawī, #1436—from Abū Hurayrah with a isnād which is ḥasan.

increased, if his religion is weak the test is decreased. A misfortune does not cease to befall a servant until he walks on the earth with no sin." Tirmidhī said: "The ḥadīth is ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ."⁹

We reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "Allāh said: If one of My servants is afflicted in his body, wealth, property or children and faces that with beautiful patience (*ṣabrūn jamīl*), I will be ashamed of him on the Day of Judgement to weigh his scales or open his account."¹⁰

Section Two: The Etiquettes of Patience

Of the etiquettes of patience is to apply it at the onset of a disaster, this is based on the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: "Patience is at the onset of a disaster." The ḥadīth is Ṣaḥīḥ.¹¹

Of its etiquettes also is *al-istirjā'* when a misfortune strikes, this is based on the ḥadīth of Umm Salamah (*radi Allāhu 'anha*) as reported by Muslim.¹² Of its etiquettes is to have a tranquil body and tongue, however crying is allowed. Of good patience is for the one being tested not to reveal the impact of a misfortune on him, as Umm Sulaym the wife of Abū Ṭalḥah did when her son died, the ḥadīth is famous in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.¹³

⁹ Tirmidhī, vol.2, p.64; Ibn Mājah, #4023; Dārimī, vol.2, p.320; Ibn Ḥibbān, #699; Hākim, vol.1, pp.40, 41; Aḥmad, vol.1, pp.172, 174, 180—from Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (*radiy Allāhu 'anhū*) and the isnād is ṣaḥīḥ.

¹⁰ Al-'Irāqī stated in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.72: 'Reported by Ibn 'Adiyy in *al-Kāmil* from the ḥadīth of Anas with a weak isnād.' Zabīdī in *al-Ithāf*, vol.9, p.27 ascribed it to al-Ḥakīm in *al-Nawādir* as did al-Daylamī in *al-Firdaws*.

¹¹ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.138; Muslim, #626 and others from Anas (*radiy Allāhu 'anhū*).

¹² Muslim #918; also by Mālik, vol.1, p.236; Abū Dāwūd, #3119; and Tirmidhī, #3506.

¹³ Muslim #2144; Bukhārī, vol.3, p.135—from the ḥadīth of Anas (*radiy Allāhu 'anhū*).

Thābit al-Bunānī said: “Abdu’llāh Ibn Muṭarrif died, and Mutarrif went out to his people in a good thobe and scented.’ The people became angry and said: “Abdu’llāh has died, and you have the nerve to come out in a such a nice garment and scented?!” Muṭarrif said: ‘Am I to submit to anguish? My Lord has promised me three things, each of which is more beloved to me than the world and whatever is in it. Allāh said:

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ
 ﴿١٥٦﴾ أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ
 هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

“Those who say, when afflicted with a misfortune, ‘Surely we belong to Allāh, and to Him we return.’ Upon these rest blessings and mercy from their Lord, and they are truly guided.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 156-157]

Then Muṭarrif then said: ‘Whatever Allāh wills to give me in the Afterlife, even if is like the amount of a cup of water is worth it to have it taken from me in this worldly life.’

Ṣilah bin Ashaym was on a military expedition with his son and said to him: ‘O my son! Go forth and fight so that I will be rewarded by Allāh.’ He went forth and fought until he was killed. Then Ṣilah went forth and fought until he was killed. The women gathered around the mother Mu’ādhah al-‘Adawīyyah and said: ‘If you have all come to congratulate me then you are all most welcome, but if you have come for anything else then you can all leave now.’

If it is possible to conceal the misfortune then it should be concealed as in doing so is of the secret blessings of Allāh. Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “If a servant falls ill, Allāh will send two angels to him. Allāh says to the

angels: "Look at what he says to those who visit him." If he praises Allāh when they come to visit him, this is raised to Allāh who already knows. Allāh will say: "If my servant dies I will enter him into Paradise, and if I cure him I will substitute a better body for him and better blood for him, and I will expiate his sins.""¹⁴

‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘From the glorification of Allāh, and understanding His right, is that you neither complain about your pain nor mention your affliction.’

Al-Aḥnaf said: ‘I lost my eyesight forty years ago, and I have not mentioned it to anyone.’

A man said to Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: ‘How are you?’ Imām replied: ‘In good health.’ The man: ‘You had a fever yesterday?’ Imām replied: ‘As long as I am in good health that is enough for you to know, do not lead me to what I dislike [i.e. complaining].’

Al-Shaqīq al-Balkhī said: ‘Whoever complains of a misfortune to other than Allāh will never ever find the sweetness of obedience to Allāh within his heart.’

Some of the wise people said: ‘Of the treasures of piety is to hide an affliction.’ They [the Salaf] used to be happy with calamities and afflictions so as to wait for the reward for enduring them, here are some stories in this regard:

What has been reported in regards to ‘Abdu’l-Malik Ibn ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz, that when he died he was buried by ‘Umar. ‘Umar stood for a while and people had gathered around him, he said: ‘May Allāh

¹⁴ Mālik, vol.2, p.940 from ‘Aṭā’ in mursal form, Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Barr stated in *al-Tamhīd*, vol.5, p.47: ‘This is what has been reported by a group of narrators from Mālik in mursal form. ‘Abbād Ibn Kathīr transmitted it from Zayd Ibn Aslam from ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yasār from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī.’ I say: ‘Abbād is not strong.’

have mercy on you O my son! You were dutiful to your father, by Allāh I have never ceased being pleased with you since Allāh gifted you to me. Now I am more pleased with you than ever before!

If it is said: 'If the intent of patience is to not dislike calamities, then humans are unable to bear this, if indeed any joy can be found in them as you have relayed, it is far from being possible!?'

The answer: Patience is only with things which are pleasing and things which are disliked, and inner feelings of agitation are not forbidden. Rather, exaggerated things like ripping up ones clothing and void speech. As for what we mentioned before about how some of them would be happy [with the onset of misfortune or affliction] then this is Divinely Legislated joy and not natural joy as the natural way is to dislike calamities and afflictions.

This is like a sick man who has a bitter remedy for his sickness, he will strive to find it and spend a lot of money in order to attain it. When he is cured, he becomes happy with it and with taking it due to the good health which comes with it. Yet his nature dislikes taking the medicine, this is the basis. Also, if a king was to say to a poor man: "if you can be patient with me beating you with this small stick, I will give you a thousand *dinārs* for each strike." The poor man would love to be beaten! Not because it does not hurt him, but due to what he anticipates at the end of it even if the beating is hard on him. Thus, the Salaf also anticipated the reward from Allāh and calamities and afflictions were weak on them.

Section Three:

On Patience as a Remedy and what is gained by
Resorting to It

Know that He Who sends down disease also sends down the remedy and promises that there is a cure. Patience, though difficult, it is possible to practice when blended with knowledge and action. The remedies for the heart's diseases are composed with them all and every sickness needs the knowledge and action which is appropriate for it, as when sicknesses differs their remedies will also differ. The meaning of a remedy therefore is: '*to oppose a sickness*'. We will put forth a similitude for you and say: if a person finds it difficult to be patient with sexual appetite and it overcomes him to the extent that he is unable to safeguard his private part, heart or eyes then the cure is three things:

1. The first is by fasting, and upon breaking it doing so with a little amount of food.
2. The second way is severing the causes which fuel it, such as a glance, for a glance stirs the heart and the heart stirs the appetite (*shahwa*). This can be achieved through seclusion (*uzla*) and caution at times when the desired forms are seen. The glance is a poisonous arrow of the arrows of the devil. No one can defend against it, except by closing the eyes or fleeing from the direction of his shot.
3. The third [way is] to entertain the self with permissible sexual relations, and that is through marriage. All of what is desired by human nature is available through what is permissible of its kind, to stop [the desire for what] is forbidden. For most people, this is the most effective remedy. Cutting off nourishment weakens all actions, yet restricting the intake of food may not suppress the desire of most men [as marriage does].

Man has to strive (*mujābada*) with himself and place himself in stark

opposition to desires and control them whenever he wants.

Know that the most intense type of patience and striving is to restrain the inner from what the soul exhorts it to, this is intensified when one is devoted and secluded. [If] internal whisperings (*wasāwīs*) will remain attractive and have no cure except to sever the [worldly] attachments and make [inward] reflection on the kingdom of heaven and earth, and the marvels of Allāh's creation and all avenues to understanding Allāh, until this conquers the heart and averts Satan's temptations and whisperings. If his inner is not traversing the right course it will not save him except with connecting this to regular recitations [of the Qur'ān], remembrance (*dhikr*) and prayer (*ṣalāh*), and he also needs presence of a sound heart. Inward reflection (*fikr al-bāṭina*) is what soothes the heart rather than outward regular recitations, and this is possible with effort and striving (*juhd*).

As for the rewards and gifts which are granted to people then this is from Allāh's blessings. As is the case with hunting and fishing, a person can strive hoping for sustenance (*riḡḡ*) yet he could make little effort and catch a lot, but he could also make a lot of effort and catch hardly anything. Thus, these efforts are all subject to the Prudence of All-Merciful (*al-Raḥmān*) and it is not within the scope of the servant's own choice. So that the attractions of this world (*dunyā*) will be removed from the heart, as that which attracts the lowest of the low is not what attracts the highest of the high. Severing the ties to what is attractive is the intent as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Truly, your Lord grants breezes (*naḡabāt*) in the days of your life. So, place yourself in their way!"¹⁵

We must empty the place (*maḡāl*) and wait for the descent of mercy

¹⁵ Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, vol.19, p.233 from Muḡammad Ibn Maslamah; al-Ḥaythamī, *al-Majma'*, vol.10, p.231 and al-Ḥaythamī said: 'It contains those whom I do not know; those whom I do know have been deemed as trustworthy.'

like one who prepares land by removing shrubs and sowing seeds, yet this will not benefit unless there is rain and it is not known when Allāh will decree the causes for rain yet the farmer trusts in the virtue of Allāh as no year is without rainfall. Likewise, there is hardly a year free of blessings.

The servant must have a heart purified of the shrubs of desires then he sows the seeds of will (*irāda*) and sincerity (*ikhhlās*). Then he exposes it to the winds of mercy, and just as seeds strengthen with rain during the relevant times in spring, likewise, he awaits for those noble times when the heart becomes active such as on the day of 'Arafah, on Fridays, and during the days of Ramaḍān. For spiritual resolve and aspirations are means decreed by Allāh to shower His mercy.

Section Four:

On the Merit of Thankfulness

Allāh said:

وَسَجْزِي الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

“We will recompense the thankful.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 145]

And He has said:

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِن شَكَرْتُمْ وَءَامَنْتُمْ

“Why would God chastise you if you are thankful and believe?”

[*al-Nisā’* (4): 147]

And He has said:

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

“For few indeed are those that are thankful among My servants.”

[*Saba'* (34): 13]

Allāh says that He gives increase for thankfulness:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

“If you are thankful, surely I will increase you.”

[*Ibrāhīm* (14): 7]

He further says that by His Will He give much:

فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ

“Allāh shall enrich you with His bounty, if He wills.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 28]

And He has said:

فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ إِنْ شَاءَ

“He will remove that (distress) for which you call upon Him, if He wills.”

[*al-An'ām* (6): 41]

And He has said:

يَرْزُقُ مِنْ يَشَاءَ

“And Allāh bestows [His abundance without measure] on whom He wills.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 212]

And He has said:

وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

“He forgives other than [associating partners with Him] to whomsoever He wills.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 48]

And He has said:

وَيَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ

“Allāh accepts the repentance of whom -He wills.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 15]

Due to the elevated nature of thankfulness, Iblīs accused humanity and said:

وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ

“You will not find most of them thankful.”

[*al-A‘rāf* (7): 17]

It was relayed that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to stand the night in prayer until he feet became cracked and swollen. ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) said to him: “You do all of this when Allāh has already forgiven what has preceded and what will proceed of your sins?” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: “Should I not be a thankful servant?”¹⁶

From Mu‘ādh (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed I love you, so say:

«اللهم أعني على ذكرك وشكرك وحسن عبادتك»

‘O Allāh help me to remember You, thank You and perfect worship of You.’”¹⁷

Section Five:

Thankfulness with Heart, Tongue and other Limbs

Thankfulness is connected with the heart (*qalb*), [expressed by] the tongue (*lisān*) and [reflected by] the limbs (*jawāriḥ*).

As for the heart; the aim of the heart is goodness towards all of

¹⁶ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.449; and Muslim, #2820

¹⁷ Abū Dawūd, #1522; Nasā’ī, vol.3, p.53—with an isnād which is ḥasan.

creation. As for the tongue; then it must express thankfulness to Allāh by praising Him (*taḥmīd*)

While the limbs, it is by using Allāh's blessings in obedience to Him using them to help stay away from acts of disobedience. Showing thankfulness for the eyes: it is to conceal every shameful thing they see in a Muslim. The thankfulness of the ears is that they conceal every shameful thing they hear about him. All these are included under thankfulness of the limbs.

Thankfulness of the tongue is to express contentment with Allāh, as He commanded. Thus, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Speaking of the blessings [of Allāh] is thankfulness [to Allāh], and not speaking of them is ingratitude (*kufṛ*)."¹⁸ It has been reported about two righteous men from the Anṣār that one of them said to the other: 'How are you today?' The other man replied: '*Alḥamdulillāh*.' The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Say this [i.e. '*alḥamdulillāh*'].'"¹⁹

It has been reported that a man gave salāms to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), 'Umar gave *salāms* back and then said to the man: 'How are you this morning?' The man replied: 'I praise Allāh!' 'Umar then said: 'This is what I wanted [to hear you say].'²⁰

The Salaf used to ask each other the same question and their intent was to show thankfulness to Allāh, in this way the one who is thankful to Allāh is obedient to Allāh.

¹⁸ Aḥmad, vol.4, p.278; al-Kharā'itū, *Faḍīlat al-Shukr*, p.83; Abū'l-Shaykh, *al-Amṭhāl*, p.111; Ibn Abi Dunyā, *al-Shukr*, p.64—via the route of al-Nu'mān Ibn Bashīr (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) and the ḥadīth is ḥasan.

¹⁹ I did not find this report among the sources, and furthermore the opposite of this has been affirmed.

²⁰ Compare this with what is found in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, vol.4, p.84 and al-'Irāqī's edit!

Section Six:

Thankfulness is Not Realised Except with Understanding of What Allāh Loves

Know that the act of thankfulness (*shukr*) and the abandonment of ingratitude (*kufṛ*) is only perfected with understanding of what Allāh loves as the meaning of thankfulness is using His blessings in what He loves. The meaning of ingratitude (*kufrān*) the opposite of this, either abandoning [the blessing] or using for that which Allāh dislikes.

There are two faculties by which to distinguish between what Allāh loves and what He hates:

1. One is [the faculty of] hearing, as transmitted by the verses [of the Qur'ān]
2. The second [faculty] is the insight of the heart (*baṣrat al-qalb*), and it is to see with the eye of consideration (*bi-'ayn al-i'tibār*). Thus, Allāh sent the messengers and through them made the way easier for mankind. This knowledge is knowledge of all the rules of law governing the acts of the servants. For whoever does not follow the rules of law in all of his actions can never be truly thankful.

As for the second [faculty], which is looking with the eye of consideration, then it is, understanding the wisdom (*ḥikma*) of Allāh in everything He has created. For Allāh did not create a thing in the world except that within it is a wisdom, under which is a purpose (*maqṣūd*), and the purpose is what is loved (*maḥbūb*) [by Allāh]. The wisdom is divided into what is evident and what is hidden.

In terms of the evident matters, then it like the knowledge that the wisdom in the creation of the sun is for night and day to appear, day being for seeking livelihood and the night for rest, this is of the

wisdoms of the sun. Likewise the clouds also have a wisdom in that it indicates the onset of rain. As for the wisdom in the various celestial bodies then this is hidden and not understood by the creation, some may be able to discover some of the wisdoms, such as them adorning the heavens, and there is no part of the world devoid of wisdom.

Similarly, in regards to human organs, some of which contain that which is evident in its wisdom such as the knowledge that the eyes are for seeing, the hand for grasping and the legs for walking. As for the internal bodily organs, such as the pancreas, the liver, the kidneys, the individual veins, the nerves and muscles, and the tender and firm ventricles that they contain, then those who do understand it, possess only limited knowledge of Allāh's knowledge.

Everyone who uses something for a purpose other than that for which it was created for denies the blessing of Allāh. Whoever strikes someone with his hand denies the blessing of the hands as they were created avert whatever harms him and to perform that which will benefit him, not for him to harm others. Similarly, his two eyes, if he uses them to look at what is not lawful then he has denied their blessings and also the blessing of [the light of] the sun, since sight is made complete through both. These two were created only for [the servant] to see through them what is useful for his religion in his world and for protection from what harms him.

Know the purpose behind bringing creation into existence and the creation of this world, is to assist mankind to reach Allāh through them. There is no reaching Allāh except by what He loves, and intimacy with Him in this world, and to shun the worldly delights and traps. There is no intimacy except through continual remembrance (*dhikr*); and no love except through knowledge gained through continual reflection (*fikr*). And continual remembrance and contempla-

tion are not possible except through the continuity of the body. The body can only be maintained by the earth, and water, and air; and those can only exist through the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the creation of all the organs, visible and hidden. All of this is for the benefit of the body which hosts the soul and it is 'the serene soul' (*nafs al-muṭma'inah*) which returns to Allāh with lengthy acts of worship (*'ibādah*) and knowledge (*mar'ifa*). This is why Allāh says,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

"I have created jinn and mankind only that they should worship Me."

[*al-Dhāriyāt* (52): 56]

So whoever uses a thing other than in obedience to Allāh, has denied the blessings of Allāh in all the means which he necessarily had to use to commit the particular sin.

We will mention an example of a hidden (*kafīyya*) wisdom that is not totally obscure, so that you may recognise the ways of thankfulness and ingratitude for blessings: Silver and gold are a blessing created by Allāh, through which this world is sustained. They are two minerals with no benefit in themselves. However, people are in great need of them and all need them to survive. It is needed for food, drink, clothing, transportation, and all necessities. Yet a person could be unable to gain that which he really need and possess something which he does not need.

For example, a person may have some saffron on him though he needs a camel to travel on, and another man has a camel but is really in need of saffron, so they both actually should exchange what they possess with each other, yet there has to be amounts exchanged to their respective value. This is so that the one who possesses the camel does not sell it for the price of saffron, as the two are not of the same

value, its respective value should be given. Otherwise this would be like selling a house for a garment, a slave for a pair of shoes or flour for a donkey—these things are not equal in value.

Thus, Allāh created gold and silver as two balanced judges among wealth and property, so that wealth may be evaluated by them. Thus, it will be said: this camel is worth one hundred, and this amount of saffron is worth one hundred. So these two things, since they are equal in one thing, are made equal. Money has no intrinsic value and if it did then affairs would not be organised. Thus, Allāh created them, so that it could be exchanged between hands and for there to be justice in regards to other forms of wealth and property. If you realise the wisdom in them then you will know that whoever works to use them in a way which opposes the intended purpose and is ungrateful for the blessing that Allāh has placed in them.

Therefore whoever hoards them, wrongs them and nullifies the wisdom in them. He is like one who places the ruler of Muslims in prison, thereby preventing him from making rulings. Indeed, when [they] are hoarded, the wisdom [in them] is lost, as is their intended purpose. As many of the creation are unable to read the divine lines written on the pages with divine writing²¹ they do not comprehend eyesight least of all insight. Allāh informed them with words which they heard through His Messenger (ﷺ) that,

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا
فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

“Those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend them in the way of Allāh give them the tidings of a painful chastisement.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 34]

²¹ These are allegorical expressions however they are not to be applied in the right of Allāh's Names and Attributes as research in the topic is restricted [to what has been relayed in the Qur'ān and Sunnah] which has sufficient detail.

Anyone who makes out of dinars and dirhams vessels of gold or silver is ungrateful for the blessing and is worse than he who hoards.

An example of this would be to subject the ruler of a country [to the labours of] weaving, street-cleaning or work usually done by common people. Or like iron, copper, brass and other materials which are used instead of gold and silver for holding and preserving liquids. For he who is incapable of discerning this wisdom with Divine Mercy, then it should be said to him: "He who drinks from a vessel of gold or silver, it is as if he were pouring into his stomach the fire of Hell."²²

Similarly, all who use silver and gold so as to deal in usury have expelled them from their intended purpose. This is one of the hidden wisdoms of the rule of the two currencies [gold and silver].

Thankfulness and ingratitude are to be considered with these examples, in all your affairs, movement, stillness, speech, silence etc. Everything that emerges from you has to show either thankfulness or it shows ingratitude some of which can be described as being disliked and some to be treated with caution.

An example of this is in Allāh creating two hands for you making one of them stronger than the other and so that one can be used for noble things, like holding the Qur'ān, and the other can be used for lowly things such as removing impurities. If you were to hold the Qur'ān with your left hand and remove impurities with your right hand then you would have flipped the intent, intending the noble with what is lowly.

Similarly, if you put your shoe on and begin with the left foot, you

²² Muslim, vol.6, p.134 from Umm Salamah (*radīy Allāhu 'anbā*), refer to al-'Allāmah al-Albānī, *Irwā' al-Ghālīl*, #33.

have done wrong, because the shoe is a protection for the foot and the foot benefits by it. You can make other analogies based on this.

Similarly, he who breaks the branch of a tree needlessly, for no immediate and essential purpose, nor need, denies the blessing of Allāh in the creation of trees. Yet if he did this with a tree which belonged to someone else, he would have committed a wrong even if he was in need.

Section Seven:

The Nature of blessings and their Divisions

Know that every sought after [good] thing is called a blessing (*na'ma*), yet a blessing in reality is happiness of the Afterlife (*al-sa'āda al-ākhirīyya*). Names other than 'blessing' are also permitted to be used and in regards to all of our affairs they are divided into four divisions:

We shall explain the four divisions of the means that aid [happiness in the Afterlife] and the pleasures that are called blessings:

1. What is beneficial in both this life and the Afterlife, such as knowledge (*ilm*) and good character (*ḥusn al-ḥuluq*), is the real blessing.
2. What is harmful in both this life and the Afterlife, this is the real affliction.
3. What is beneficial at present yet harmful later such as following desires (*shahwā*). This is a misfortune for those who possess insight while the ignorant one deems it as a blessing.

An example of this is a hungry man who finds honey which has poison in it, he views it as a blessing if he is ignorant, yet if he knows that this poison is present in it he deems it as a misfortune.

4. What is harmful at present yet beneficial later, this is a blessing for those who have insight and misfortune according to the ignorant.

An example of this is foul-tasting medicine, which is distasteful at the time it is taken, yet cures the disease later. The ignorant child who takes it will regard it as a misfortune while the intelligent one deems it as a blessing. Similarly, if a child needs cupping (*hijāmah*) the father will view its use as worthy as in the end it will bring a cure, while the mother will prevent its usage due to her excessive love and concern for her child, and due to her being ignorant of the benefits in such treatment. The child will blindly follow his mother due to his ignorance and will find compassion with her rather than with the father, regarding the father as an enemy. If he was intelligent he will know that in fact that in this case the mother is a hidden enemy in the form of a true friend, as she is the one preventing him from receiving the treatment of cupping which will in the end result in worst diseases that the pain which may come with cupping. An ignorant friend is worse than the intelligent enemy. Now, every person is his own friend, but an ignorant friend. This is why he may deal with it [his soul] in a way you that you would not deal with your enemy [i.e. reprimand your own soul even more].

Section Eight:

An Exposition of Allāh's Abundant Blessings which Cannot Be enumerated

Know that blessings are divided into what is sought as an end in itself and what is sought for a purpose. This purpose is the happiness of the Afterlife and it is summed up in four matters: immortality with no extinction, eternal happiness with no grief; knowledge with no ignorance and eternal wealth with no poverty—this is real happiness.

As far as the second type, it stands for those means leading to the aforementioned means to happiness which are four:

1. The first and most essential are the merits of the soul, namely, faith (*īmān*) and good character traits (*ḥusn al-khuluq*).
2. The second is merits of the body, strength, good health and the likes
3. The third means, blessings that surround the body and they are: wealth, prominence, nobility and family.
4. The fourth means which combine the blessings with whatever is appropriate for these virtues such as guidance (*hidāya*), being on the right path (*rushd*), doing what is right (*tasdīd*) and assistance (*ta'yīd*) and all of these blessings are tremendous.

So if it is said: how can the path to the Afterlife be in need of external blessings like wealth and prominence? We say: these things move like a wing and are a means that facilitate the goal.

As for wealth, then the student of knowledge if he does not have a sufficient amount will be like a soldier going into battle without a weapon, as he will devote all his time in seeking provision and be preoccupied from seeking knowledge, remembrance [of Allāh] and contemplation.

As for prominence then it averts humiliation and oppression from a person and there will always be enemies trying to harm him and oppressors attempting to transgress against him. If he does not have prominence, his heart will be preoccupied with the fear of harm from his enemies and transgressors and his heart is the main capital to preserve. Thus, the preoccupation with enemies and transgressors and the fear of their harm is only averted with honour and prominence.

As for good health, strength, long life and the likes then they are

blessings, since knowledge and action are only complete through them. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Two blessings many people lose: good health and free time.”²³ When the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked: “Who are the best people?” The replied (ﷺ): “Whoever has a long life and has good actions.”²⁴

As for wealth and prominence then they are two blessings and we have already discussed the evils [of wealth and prominence]. However, they are not always blameworthy.

As for guidance (*hidāya*), being on the right path (*rushd*), doing what is right (*tasdīd*) and assistance (*ta'yīd*) then the fact that these are of the greatest blessings is not hidden. For this reason, it was said by one of the poets:

If a young boy does not have Allāh's Aid
Then he will be more likely not to earn from his efforts

Section Nine:

The Blessings of Allāh in the Methods through which food reaches us

Know that we have mentioned a number of blessings and one of these is the blessing of good health in one's body, this is the second virtue in the list. If we wanted to enumerate the means to this blessing we would be unable, however food is one of the reasons for good health. We will mention some of the means by which food is acquired. Of the blessings which Allāh has given you, therefore, is

²³ Aḥmad, #2340, 3207; Bukhārī, #6412; Tirmidhī, #2405, 2406; Ibn Mājah, #4170; Ibn ul-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd*, #1; al-Dārimī, #2710; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.306; Abū Nu'aym, vol.3, p.74 and vol.8, p.174; al-Qadā', *Musnad al-Shihāb*, #295—from Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*).

²⁴ Aḥmad, vol.4, pp.188, 190; Tirmidhī, #2330; al-Baghawī, #1245—from 'Abdu'llāh Ibn Busr (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

His creation for you of instruments of sensation and movement [to aid] in seeking nourishment, observe the wisdom of Allāh's order in the creating the five senses that are the instruments of perception.

The first of perception is the sense of touch and this is the first sense He created for the animals. The lowest level of sensation is to feel that with which you are in [direct] contact and which touches you. There is no doubt that the sensing of what is at a distance from you is more complete. Allāh has created for you the sense of smell by which you comprehend odours from afar, however you do not know the direction from where the odour is emanating and thus you need to walk around until you find the source of the odour and may even be the case that you do not find it. Thus, Allāh created sight for you that you may perceive what is far from you, know its direction and can go towards it.

If Allāh did not create this for you, you would be deficient and you would be unable to comprehend what is beyond the walls and the barriers. An enemy could be hiding from you behind a wall and get close to you before you would know what is behind it and you would be unable to flee. Thus, Allāh created hearing for you so that you could perceive sounds behind rocks, and that is not all. If you did not have a sense of taste you would be unable to sense what is good for you and what is not. This is as opposed to a tree which absorbs all water it receives pure or salty, it does not have a sense of taste as if it did it would not absorb it and that would lead the tree to dying due to its dryness. Then Allāh blesses you with another feature which is the most noble of all of them, which is the intellect (*'aql*); and by it you recognise harmful and beneficial foods; and by it you know how to cook foods, and prepare their ingredients. Therefore, through your intelligence you benefit from the food which is the source of your health and the least of the wisdom in it. For the greatest wisdom in it is the knowledge of Allāh. For the external senses are only some

of the perceptions.

Do not think that we have discussed these senses with its due right, as eyesight is just one of the senses and the eye is the tool of sight. The eye is made of ten different layers²⁵ some of which are moist and some of different issue types. Each layer has its quality, form, class, appearance, width, sphere and arrangement. If one of the ten layers were faulty or one of the qualities of each layer [faulty], no physician would be able to do anything to bring it back. This is just one of the senses, then what about the sense of hearing and the rest of the senses? It would not be possible, even in many volumes, so what then do you think of the whole body?

Then consider at the creation of power and ability and the different types of tools of movement. If sight were created only so that you can recognise food, and if a natural inclination, longing and appetite were not created to incite you to movement, sight would surely be useless. How many sick men see food, which is good for them but they are unable to take it as they have no appetite. Thus, Allāh has created in you the appetite for food. However, if this appetite is not controlled by consuming the required amount of food, based on the need you would have, can destroy yourself. Thus, Allāh has created in you the dislike to eat after eating to your full. The same is to be said in regards to sexual intercourse, the wisdom in it is for the progeny to continue.

Then, Allāh created limbs for you which are the tools to move so as to attain food and other things. Of these limbs as the two hands which are composed of joints so as to move, extend and close not like mere lumps of wood.

Allāh has made the palm wide with five fingers which are of differ-

²⁵ [TN]: The retina is composed of ten layers.

ent sizes in a row, the thumbs are at the end with the remaining fingers next to it. If the hand was stuck or attached together, you would not be able to achieve your goal. Then He created fingernails to protect the tips of the fingers from injury. Fragile things, which the fingers cannot grasp, can be picked up by the tips of your fingernails. Then imagine if you were able to grasp food with your hand, how would this suffice if the food could not reach the stomach? Hence Allāh has created for you a mouth and jaws from two bones on which he placed the teeth. He has divided the teeth based on what is needed for food and thus some of the teeth are adequate for breaking, such as the canine teeth, some are adequate for grinding, which are the molar teeth. Allāh made the lower jaw movable and the upper jaw fixed.

Observe at the marvels of Allāh's creation as all mills which are created by people have a lower part which is fixed and an upper part which is movable, but the mill created by Allāh is not like this as if the upper jaw was movable and the lower fixed the other noble organs would have been in danger.

Observe how Allāh has blessed you by creating the tongue! It moves within the mouth transporting food to the teeth when necessary like a shovel-scoop does in a mill, this in itself is amazing not to mention the ability and power of speech [which is obtained with the tongue]. Then, observe at how you swallow food in your mouth which was dry and you made it moist so as to flow down the throat. Observe how Allāh has created saliva glands under your tongue and softens food in the mouth.

Then this chewed food reaches the stomach from the mouth and it is unable to reach the stomach merely via the hand so behold! Allāh created a pharynx and a larynx for you. It is composed of different sections which open so as to accept food until the food transfers while

in the corridor of the pharynx to the stomach. So if food reaches the stomach, as pieces of bread or fruit or anything else, it cannot become flesh, bone or blood until it has been properly digested. Allāh made the stomach in the form akin to that of a pot in which food enters and is further prepared by four members: the liver on the right side, the spleen on the left side; in front is the thorax and behind is the flesh of the spinal column. Food becomes like a liquid so as to be easily absorbed by the veins, then from the veins to the liver where it stays for a while to be purified and then is distributed throughout the whole body and some of it remains to be excreted.

Furthermore, in a human body there are muscles, veins which cannot be enumerated, they differ in their sizes, some being large others small, some fine others thick. There is nothing except that within it is wisdom and all of that is from Allāh, glory unto Him.

Observe then [first] the blessings of Allāh upon you, that you may be able to give thanks! as you do not really know the blessings of Allāh upon you other than food which is least of blessings. You only know that you get hungry and then have to eat, just like an animal; that you get tired and have to sleep, that you get aroused and need to copulate. So if you only know that which a donkey knows how can you possibly show thankfulness to Allāh as He deserves?! What we have alluded here from Allāh blessings is only a summary of a drop in one of the oceans of Allāh's blessings, so make an analogy on that. This is just a portion of what we and all of the creation know about Allāh's blessings in addition to that which they do not know which is less than a drop in an ocean, Allāh said:

وَأِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا

“If you count the blessings of Allāh, never will you be able to number them.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 17]

Section Ten:

The Marvels of Food and Treatment

Know that foods are plentiful and various, and Allāh has marvels in His creation which cannot be enumerated. They are categorised into foods, cures, fruits and others:

We will discuss some foods: if you had some wheat and you ate it you would still remain hungry and you will be in more need to work so as to produce more of it and double in order for it to fulfil your need, this is by farming it. This involves finding a plot of land wherein water mixes with its earth and becomes muddy, but even this is not enough as more than water and earth is needed. If it was left in solid land like that nothing would grow on it due to the lack of air and for that reason it has to be left for the air to penetrate it, but the air does not work by itself. There then has to be wind which moves the air to affect the soil. Yet even all of this is not sufficient, there has to be the heat of spring and summer as during the cold of winter nothing will grow. Then look at the water which is needed for this agriculture. How has Allāh created it? Allāh brought forth springs from which rivers flow. As some land is highland water cannot reach it, so Allāh sends clouds pushed by winds so as to spread throughout all regions of the world. These are heavy clouds which He sends to the earth continuously at the times it is needed.

Observe how Allāh created the mountains to preserve the rainwater and from which springs gush forth continuously, if it came out at one go the land would flood and the agriculture would be totally destroyed.

Observe, then, how Allāh has made the sun subservient and how He has created it, despite its distant from the earth it is able to provide heat to the earth at different times, so that heat can reach when

needed and cold can reach when needed.

Allāh has created the moon and made hydration from its main features just as he has made heating of the main features of the sun. So it ripens the fruit predetermined by the Creator, the All-Wise. Every celestial body in the heavens is subjected for a benefit, just as the sun and the moon have been. None of these is devoid of many wise decrees, which the power of human nature cannot enumerate. The sun and the moon have other wisdoms which we have not mentioned here and they cannot be enumerated.

As not all foods are to be found in all places, Allāh has made merchants who are focused on gathering money even though it does not benefit them in most cases as they just gather it, or they could be travelling on a business trip or for trade and all of the wealth and property could sink at sea or be stolen by highway robbers, or they could die while they are in a distant country and then their wealth will be taken by the rulers of that land. The best which could happen to the wealth of merchants is that it is taken by their inheritors, who are in fact the worst enemy to them if they but knew.

Observe how Allāh has placed hope and heedlessness upon them, to the extent that they go through great difficulties of travelling by sea or taking dangerous routes in the East and West just to make a profit.

Know that which turns people away from thankfulness for blessings is ignorance (*jahl*) and heedlessness (*ghafla*). They are prevented by ignorance and heedlessness from recognising the blessings; for one can only be thankful for a blessing that one recognises. Then, when [people] do recognise a blessing, they assume that being thankful for it is only to verbally say, “*alḥamdulillāh*” or “*shukrullillāh*”, they do not know that the meaning of thankfulness is to use a blessing to

perfect the wisdom that Allāh intended for it, which is obedience to Allāh.

Section Eleven:

Causes which turn people away from Thankfulness

As for heedlessness, there are many causes. One cause is that people, **in** their ignorance (*jahl*), do not regard what is general within creation **in** all of their conditions as being a blessing. For this reason, they **are** not thankful for all of the blessings which we have mentioned, **because** they generally impact on all from the creation and are **relevant** to them in all of their states. As a result, they do not view that **any** of those things has any relevance, and as a result they do not **regard** it as a blessing from Allāh whatsoever. Thus, you will not see **them** thanking Allāh for air, even though they would die if they were **devoid** of air for a moment, and if one of them was imprisoned in **a** sauna or in a well they would die. If one of them was tested with **any** of these three examples and then saved from it, only then would **they** thank Allāh for the blessing of salvation—this is of the utmost **ignorance**. As their thankfulness is only based on a blessing being **removed** and then returning to them. Blessings are to be thanked for **in** all situations. Yet you do not see the person with sight thankful **for** the health of his eyes until his eyes are blinded, and if, then, his sight is restored to him, he becomes aware of it [as a blessing] and **is** thankful and reckons it a blessing.

It has also been relayed that some of them complained about **pov-**erty to some of the people of insight (*baṣīrah*), and displayed how **intensely** unhappy he was. So he [his friend] asked him: 'Would it please you, to be blind and to have ten thousand *dirhams*?' He replied: 'No.' Then he asked: 'Would it please you to be deaf and to have **ten** thousand *dirhams*?' He replied: 'No.' Then he asked: 'Would it please you to be without hands and legs and to have twenty thousand

[*dirhams*]?’ He replied: ‘No.’ Then he asked: “Would it please you to be mad, with ten thousand *dirhams*?” He replied: ‘No.’ Then he asked: ‘So either you are ashamed to complain to your Lord when He has given you that which is worth fifty thousand?’

It was narrated from some of the poor righteous people that one of them was suffering from severe poverty that he despaired. Then he had a dream in which he saw someone saying to him, ‘Would you like me to cause you to forget *Sūrah ul-An‘ām* and there will be a thousand dinars for you?’ He replied, ‘No.’ The man asked, ‘What about *Sūrah Hūd*?’ He replied, ‘No.’ The man asked ‘What about for *Sūrah Yūsuf*?’ He replied, ‘No.’ The man asked ‘What is with you that you possess that which is worth a hundred thousand *dirhams* and you complain?’ When [he] woke up he was relieved.’

Ibn al-Simmāk visited [the caliph Ḥārūn] al-Rashīd and admonished him. The caliph cried and then Ibn al-Simmāk asked for some water to be brought in a vessel, then he asked: ‘O leader of the believers! If you were prevented from this drink would you exchange the world for it?’ The caliph replied, ‘Yes.’ Then he asked, “So drink to your need, may Allāh bless you!” When al-Rashīd drank he asked: ‘If you were prevented from urinating out this drink and to cure it you would have to give the world and what is in it, would you do so?’ The caliph replied, ‘Yes.’ [Ibn al-Simmāk] said, ‘So what is the use of something for which a cup of water is better?’

This shows that the blessing that Allāh on a servant in drinking water when thirsty is better than possessing the entire earth and the release of excrement is of the greatest blessings. This is just a brief indication of blessings.

Know that there is not a servant of Allāh except that when he closely examines his condition will find a blessing from Allāh, which

are specific to him and which are not shared by everyone, yet he may share them with a few people. As for intellect, every servant of Allāh is pleased with Allāh for his intellect: he believes that he is the most intelligent of men. Few are those who ask Allāh for [more] intelligence.

As for character, every servant sees the faults of others which he dislikes or character traits which he detests. He views himself as being devoid of such [personality] defects, so he should be occupied with thankfulness to Allāh, since he is in a better condition.

There is not a person except that he knows the inner affairs and hidden aspects of his own self. If the cover was lifted on that for others to see he would be put to shame. So then what if all people were able to see what he hides? Should he not therefore be thankful to Allāh for the beautiful covering of his deeds? We also say there is no servant but Allāh has provided him things, in his dwelling, country, companions, relatives, prominence and the rest of what is dear to him. For example, Allāh has made him a believer and not a disbeliever, alive and not inanimate, a person and not an animal, male and not female, healthy and not sick²⁶ and sound, not defective. All these are particular [characteristics], despite being general to others.

Allāh has given him blessings which other do not have even though he may wish to exchange his condition with that of someone else. He will also see that those lower than him are much more than those who are above him. So then why does he look at those who are above him yet he does not look at those who are lower than him? In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs²⁶ from Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ): “If anyone of you look at those whom Allāh has blessed in terms of wealth, property and appearance, then also look at those who are lower than you rather than those who have been

²⁶ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.276; and Muslim, #2963

more blessed than you.”

Tirmidhī has another wording²⁷ which is: “Look at those who are lower than you and do not look at those who are above you as this will make you deem as insignificant the blessings that Allāh has conferred upon you.” He will find that Allāh has given him many blessings, especially in regards to those who have been preferred in regards to *imān*, Qur’ān, knowledge, sunnah, free time, good health, security etc. It has been relayed in some aḥadīth: “Whoever recites the Qur’ān is rich”²⁸ and in another narration: “The Qur’ān is wealth, so there is no poverty after it.”²⁹ In another ḥadīth: “Whoever wakes up safe in his home, healthy in his body, having sustenance for the day—then it is as if he has the world and all that is in it.”³⁰

A poet said,

If sustenance, good health and safety does not reach you,
Then you would have woken up a brother
of grief which will not leave you

So if it is said: ‘What is the treatment for these heedless hearts, to make them aware of the blessings of Allāh so that they may become thankful?’

Answer: As for the hearts which have insight (*mubṣira*), then they contemplate on the symbols of the different manifestations of Allāh’s

²⁷ Bukhārī, #2515; and also in Muslim, #2963

²⁸ Reported by Ibn ‘Adiyy, *al-Kāmil*, vol.3, p.1332—in the isnād is Yazīd Ibn Abān and he is weak and Sharīk al-Nakha‘ī is the same.

²⁹ Tabarānī, #738; al-Qaḍā‘ī, *Musnad al-Shihāb*, #276; from Anas (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and in its isnād is al-Raḡāshī and he is weak.

³⁰ Tirmidhī, #2449, 2450; Ibn Mājah, #4141; al-Ḥumaydī, #439; Bukhārī, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, #300; al-Khaṭīb, vol.3, p.364—from ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn Maḥṣan and Salamah Ibn ‘Abdu’llāh and he is majhūl; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2503; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.5, p.249; al-Qaḍā‘ī, *Musnad al-Shihāb*, #539; Abū ‘l-Dardā’ (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), yet the chain of transmission contains a narrator who has been accused [of not being reliable]; and also relayed by Ibn Abī Dunyā from Ibn ‘Aṣr as our Shaykh mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘*, #5918 and it is ḥasan.

blessings. As for the foolish hearts then they do not consider a blessing from Allāh as a blessing except after a misfortune. The way for a person with such a heart always has to look at those who are lower than him, or those in a far worse situation than him, always, and do what some of the people of the past used to do. He should go to visit hospitals in order to see the different afflictions on the sick and then reflect on his own good health and prosperity. He should look at the mentally ill and how they self-harm, and then thank Allāh for his good health. He should visit the graves and then know that the most beloved thing to the dead is for them to be able to return to the world, the disobedient would like to make up for his disobedience and increase his acts of obedience, as indeed the Day of the Resurrection is the day of deprivation (*yawm ul-taghābun*). So when one visits the graves so as to know the most beloved thing unto him and then averts the remainder of his life to the obedience of Allāh and thanks Him. What also has to be treated, for those hearts which are far from thankfulness is to know that the blessing, if one does not thank Allāh for it, will vanish and not return.

Al-Fuḍayl said: 'It is incumbent upon you to have constant thankfulness for the blessings of Allāh. It is rare that a blessing is withdrawn from and then returned to the people.'

Section Twelve:

On what Patience and Thankfulness share

You may say that what I have mentioned that Allāh has placed a blessing in every existing thing, this would indicate that affliction does not essentially exist. What, then, does patience mean? And if affliction does exist, what is the meaning of thankfulness for an affliction? How can patience and thankfulness be combined? As patience is accompanied by pain, while thankfulness is accompanied by joy, and the two are mutually contradictory.

Know that affliction exists just as the blessings exists, yet not every affliction demands patience, such as unbelief for example. It is an affliction yet patience has no applicability to it, the same with disobedience, the only issue here is that the unbeliever does not know that his unbelief is an affliction akin to someone who has a defect yet does not feel pain due to his faintness. The disobedient one knows his disobedience, as it is incumbent upon him to abandon it. In fact, man is not commanded to bear patiently any tribulation that he is able to dispel. So for instance, if someone leaves water until thirst causes him great suffering, he is not commanded to bear it with patient, rather he is commanded to relieve the suffering. Patience in suffering is applicable only when suffering cannot be alleviated. Thus, patience in this world refers to what can also be considered a blessing.

For this reason, it is possible to imagine combining both roles of thankfulness with patience. For example, wealth can become a cause for a man's destruction as he could be targeted for murder due to his money. Good health can also be the same, for there is no blessing in this world except that it can become an affliction. A servant in some affairs can find that a thing contains affliction and blessing at the same time.

For example, a man's ignorance of his time of death, this is a blessing upon him, since, if he knew, he may lose any pleasure in life and may become overwhelmed with grief. Similarly, his ignorance of what some people hold against him, he may become overwhelmed with pain, hatred (*ḥiqd*), envy (*ḥasad*) and occupy himself with revenge (*intiḳām*). Similarly also, his ignorance of the blameworthy characteristics (*ṣifāt madhmuma*) that other people have, were he to known them, he would detest the other and harm him.

Also from this is the obscurity of the Day of Judgement, Night of

Power (*laylat ul-qadr*), the hour on Friday [when the supplication is accepted]³¹—all of that is a blessing as the ignorance of it encourages a person to strive to seek it out. So these are aspects of ignorance of Allāh's blessings, so then what about knowledge of these blessings?

We have said that: Allāh has placed a blessing in all things to the extent that pains could be a blessing in respect to the one in pain, and it could be a blessing in respect to someone else, like the pain of the unbelievers in the Hellfire in the Afterlife. This is blessing in respect to the people of Paradise, as if a people were not punished those favoured ones would not know the extent of their blessing. The joy of the people of Paradise will double when the pain of the people of Hellfire is mentioned. Do you not see that the people of the worldly life neither increase their joy with the brightness of the sun, even though they are in immense need for it, nor are they with the adornment of the heavens, even though it is better than any planet. They do neither perceive them nor express joy at them.

What we have mentioned, therefore, is true: Allāh did not create anything except that within is a wisdom and blessing, either for all the servants or for some of them. Within Allāh's creation of affliction is also a blessing, either for the one going through the misfortune or for someone else. So the roles of thankfulness and patience can both be combined all the time and it cannot be described as being an absolute misfortune or an absolute blessing. A person could be pleased with something from one aspect, yet worried about it from another, thus patience with the worry in it and thankfulness for the joy in it.

Know that in poverty, illness, fear and affliction in this world there

³¹ Refer to *Zād ul-Ma'ād*, vol.1, p.388

are five matters for which the intelligent should rejoice and give thanks:

The First: for every misfortune and disease there is one that is even worse, for what Allāh decrees has no end and if Allāh doubled it upon a person, what can prevent this? So be thankful that there are not greater [misfortunes].

The Second [aspect]: A misfortune not related to the religion.

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘There is not a trial with which Allāh has afflicted me without [giving me] four blessings [through it] : that it was not in my religion; that it was not greater than it was; that I am not prohibited from pleasure in it; and that I hope for reward in it.’

A man said to Sahl Ibn ‘Abdu’llāh: ‘A thief entered my house and took my provisions.’ Sahl replied, ‘Be thankful to Allāh. Had *shayṭān* entered your heart, he would have corrupted your heart what would you be able to do? The one who deserves you with a hundred strikes yet suffices with ten should be shown thankfulness’

The Third [aspect]: It is possible for every punishment to be delayed until the Afterlife. Yet afflictions in the worldly life lessen this punishment and the afflictions of the Afterlife are eternal. There is no way in which they can be lessened, so whoever has his punishment hastened in the worldly life will not be punished a second time around, as is relayed in the ḥadīth from the Prophet (ﷺ).³² In Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim it is relayed that [the Prophet (ﷺ) said]: “Whoever has his punishment arrive sooner

³² Part of a ḥadīth in Bukhārī, vol.1, p.60; Muslim, #709; ad-Dārimī, vol.2, p.220; Nasā’ī, vol.7, p.141; al-Baghawī, #29—from ‘Ubādah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and also narrated from other Companions.

in the worldly life will not be punished a second time.”³³

The fourth [aspect]: That a misfortune or trial were preordained for him in Umm al-Kitāb (Preserved Tablets). This being afflicted and gaining relief from it is an immense blessing.

The fifth [aspect]: The reward (for misfortune) is greater [than the tribulation], as calamities of the worldly life are paths to the Afterlife just as preventing a young boy from playing is a blessing in his regard as if he was left to play all the time he would be prevented from seeking knowledge and learning manners and would thus lose out in life. Similarly, in regards to wealth, property, family, relatives and close friends—they could all be a reason for his destruction. The atheists will tomorrow wish that they were insane or mere children and that they did not depend on their intellects in relation to Allāh’s religion. There is nothing from these reasons found within a servant except that he imagines that it will be good for his religion, so he should have good thoughts about Allāh and recognise the good in what afflicts him and thanks Allāh for that. Allāh’s wisdom is vast and He knows even more than the servants what is good for His servants. Tomorrow the servants will thank Allāh for the misfortune, when they see the rewards for it. Just as a young boy after maturity thanks his teacher and father for disciplining him; for he has understood the fruit of what he gained from the discipline.

Affliction and calamities are how Allāh disciplines His servants, and His compassion is more complete and abundant than care of parents for their children. In the ḥadīth: “Allāh does not decree anything for believer except that it is good for him.”³⁴

³³ Muslim #2572; Bukhārī, vol.10, p.89; Tirmidhī, #965; Mālik, vol.2, p.941—from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*), yet also narrated from Ibn Mas‘ūd, Abū Hurayrah and Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*).

³⁴ *Musnad Ahmad* #12495 and it is ḥasan—from Anas ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

Know that at the head of destructive sins is love of the world (*ḥubb al-dunyā*), and at the head of causes for salvation is the heart being free of such love of worldly delights. Calamities instil the heart's assurance, if calamities increase the heart becomes agitated with the worldly life and does not become attached to it, the world becomes a prison for it and salvation from it is of the utmost intents like a prisoner being set free from prison.

As for pain it is necessary and is accompanied by your joy with the one who does your cupping (*ḥijāmah*) on you or or gives you a beneficial remedy for free. For you suffer and rejoice; you are patient with the pain and you thank him for the means of joy. Whoever knows this should be thankful for tribulations. But whoever does not know this, cannot be expected to be thankful for a misfortune. It cannot be imagined that one who does not believe that the reward of misfortune is greater than the misfortune will be thankful for misfortune. It is reported that a bedouin gave his condolences to Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) at the death of his father. He said,

Be patient as we will be with you as those who are patient,
Truly, the patience of the followers is only after the patience of the leader.
Your patience after 'Abbās is better than him
and Allāh is better for you than 'Abbās

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said in response: "No one has given me condolences better than this man."

If someone says: "The transmitted reports about the merit of patience indicate that a misfortune in the worldly life is better than receiving blessings. So is it for us ask Allāh for tribulation?"

Answer: There is no reason for that because of what has been reported on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) it is mentioned

that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) visited a Muslim person to check on his health as the person had become weak like chicken. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said to him: "Have you supplicated to Allāh about that or begged Him for anything in this regard?" The man replied: "Yes, I used to say: O Allāh, whatever is my punishment in the Afterlife hasten it in the worldly life." Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "*Subhān Allāh!* You neither have the power nor forbearance to handle this. If only you had said: O Allāh give me good in this life, good in the Afterlife and save us from the punishment of Hellfire."³⁵

In another ḥadīth also from Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that a man said: "O Allāh's Prophet, which supplication (*du'ā*) is better?" The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: "Ask Allāh for pardon and prosperity in this life and the next." The man came again the next day and said: "O Allāh's Messenger, which supplication is the best?" The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: "Ask Allāh for pardon and prosperity in this life and the next." The man came again the next day and the Prophet (ﷺ) replied: "Ask Allāh for pardon and prosperity in this life and the next, for if he grants you pardon and prosperity in this life and the next you would have attained success."³⁶

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs³⁷ that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Seek refuge in Allāh from the difficult moment of misfortune, from being overcome by destruction, from bad decree and from the jeering of the enemies."

Al-Muṭarrif said: "That I be given good health and am thankful is more beloved to me than that I be tested and be patient."

³⁵ Muslim, #2688; and Tirmidhī, #3483

³⁶ Tirmidhī, #3507; Ibn Mājah, #3848—and within the chain of transmission is Salamah Ibn Wardān and he is weak.

³⁷ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.449; Muslim, #2708—from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

Section Thirteen:

Which is better: Patience or Thankfulness?

The people differ [in this]: Is patience better than thankfulness? Or is thankfulness better than patience? There are lengthy words in this regard yet what can be concluded is that: in each patience and thankfulness there are degrees. The lowest degree of patience is refraining from complaint about what is disliked, and above it is contentment (*riḍā*), a station (*maqām*) beyond patience, and above contentment is thankfulness for tribulation (*al-shukr 'ala'l-balā'*), and it is above contentment.

Thankfulness also has many degrees, the shyness of the servant with the continuous blessings on him are thankfulness; his knowledge of his deficiency with respect to thankfulness is thankfulness; the knowledge of the greatness of Allāh's kindness and His concealment [of our faults] is thankfulness; the recognition that blessings originate from Allāh that we undeservedly receive is thankfulness; the knowledge that thankfulness itself is one of the blessings of Allāh is thankfulness; humility with blessings and modesty with them is thankfulness; and thankfulness to the means [by which blessings are acquired] is thankfulness, based on the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: "Whoever has not thanked the people has not thanked Allāh."³⁸

Good behaviour towards the blessing of Allāh is thankfulness; and receiving blessings graciously and extolling the minor blessings is thankfulness. In fact, all actions and statements which fall under thankfulness and patience cannot be compared; they are of differing degrees, so how can one be deemed as better than the other?

³⁸ Aḥmad, vol.2, pp.258, 290, 302, 303, 388, 461, 492; Abū Dāwūd, #4790; Tirmidhī, #2020; Bukhārī, *al-Adab ul-Mufrad*, p.218; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2070; Abū Nu'aym, vol.9, p.22, vol.7, p.165; vol.8, p.389; al-Qaḍā'ī, *Musnad al-Shibāb*, #829; al-Kharā'ifī, *Faḍīlat al-Shukr*, p.80—from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) and it is ṣaḥīḥ. It has supporting narrations from al-Ash'ath Ibn Qays and others.

However, we say: if patience is added to thankfulness, such as when spending wealth for acts of obedience, then thankfulness is better [than patience in poverty] because it also includes patience.

In it also is joy in the blessing of Allāh; and in it is endurance of the pain of spending on the poor and putting aside what could be spent on what is permitted, thus it is better than patience in this sense.

If thankfulness for wealth encourages disobedience, and averts him to permitted blessings, then patience [of the poor] at this point is better than thankfulness. The poor person who is patient is better than the one who clings to his wealth yet wastes it on permissible things. For the poor one has struggled with himself; and perfect patience with the tribulation of Allāh. This is because what first come to people's minds regarding blessing and wealth is that it enriches them. And what first comes to mind regarding thankfulness is that a person should say, '*alḥamdulillah*'. If you have understood the definitions we mentioned, you will know that each of the two statements is applicable depending on the situation. So the poor person who is patient is better than a rich man who is thankful, and a rich man who is thankful can also be better than a poor person who is patient. When the rich man who sees himself as poor, possess no wealth for himself, except what is necessary, while the rest he spends in good deeds, or he holds on to it with the conviction that he is the treasurer for those who are in need, he awaits for a need so as to direct it to that and when he does direct to one in need he does not do it out of fame or blind following—this is better than being poor and patient. And Allāh knows best.

THE THIRD FOUNDATION

On Hope and Fear (*al-rajā' wa'l-kawf*)

Know that hope (*rajā'*) and fear (*kawf*) are two wings by means of which 'those who are brought near' (*muqarrabūn*) fly to every 'praiseworthy station' (*maqām maḥmūd*). They are like two rides with which every obstacle or path to the Afterlife can be surpassed. Therefore, their realities, merits and causes should be explained, we will mention: We will consider them in two parts: The first is hope and second is fear

Section One:

The Essence of Hope

Know that hope is among the stations of the traveller (*maqāmāt al-sālikīn*) and the states of the seekers (*aḥwāl al-ṭālibīn*) if firm and established, and if transient it is called a state (*ḥāl*). Just as yellowness is divided into that which is stable, as in the case of the yellow in gold, and that which is not, as in the case with trembling. Included

in this is yellowness of disease. Similarly the characteristics of the heart follow these divisions and whatever is not permanent is called a state, because it soon changes the heart.

Know that all beloved and disliked matters that you come across are divided into that which exists at present or existed in the past.

1. The First: what is called finding (*wajd*), taste (*dhawq*) and comprehension (*idrāk*)
2. The Second: if what is waited for is beloved it is called 'hope', and if it disliked it is called 'fear'.

Thus, hope is to wait for what is regarded as beloved however what is anticipated is a cause which is definite to happen, even if the cause is known to exist or known not to exist—it is called wishing (*tamann*). The terms of 'fear' and 'hope' is only applied to what is uncertain to happen and not in regards to what will decisively happen. Thus, it is not to be said: "I hope that the sun will rise" and "I fear that the sun will set"—as these are things which definitely will happen. So rather it is to be said "I hope that it rains" and "I fear that it will not rain".

The specialists of the hearts know that the world is like a farm for the Afterlife. The heart is like the earth and faith (*īmān*) are the seeds. Actions of obedience purify the land and allow for rivers and sources of water to flow unto it. As for the heart which is engrossed in the worldly life it is like a desolate land upon which seeds cannot grow. The Day of Judgement is like a day of harvest wherein each person harvests his own land and no farm will develop except for that which is sown with the seeds of *īmān*, and *īmān* rarely benefits with a vile heart and bad character, just as seeds do not grow in desolate land.

Therefore, the hope of a servant has to be made similar to the hope of a farmer, whoever seeks a good land and sews good seeds on it which are not poisonous, then waters it at times of need, purifies the

land of thorns and shrubs and whatever damages the land, then sits waiting for Allāh's excellence to avert thunder and lightning so that the crop completes a full term as required—such waiting is called '*rajā*' (hope). As for sowing seeds on a barren, raised and solid land which cannot receive water and has not even been adequately prepared in the first place—to wait for the harvest from such a land is called 'foolishness' (*humq*) and 'delusion' (*ghurūr*), not '*hope*'. Sowing seeds in a good land but without water and merely waiting for rain to fall on it is called 'wishing' (*tamannī*) not '*hope*'.

Therefore, the name '*hope*' is only truly applied to waiting for a beloved thing along with performing its internal causal factors which are under the servant's own control and choosing. All that remains is what is not within his own choosing, this is the excellence of Allāh. If the servant sows the seeds of *īmān* and waters it with the waters of obedience and purifying the heart from the thorns of vile character, and he waits for the excellence of Allāh to make him steadfast on that up until death and for a good end which necessitates forgiveness. His waiting for that is praiseworthy hope which encourages perseverance with acts of obedience and establishing *īmān* up until death. If the seeds of *īmān* are cut off from receiving the waters of obedience, or the heart does not abandon bad character or the heart becomes entrenched in worldly delights and then waits for forgiveness—that is foolishness and delusion. Allāh says:

فَخَلَفَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ
وَرِثُوا الْكِتَابَ يَأْخُذُونَ عَرَضَ هَذَا الْأَدْنَىٰ وَيَقُولُونَ سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا

"And there followed them successors who inherited the Scripture [while] taking the commodities of this lower life and saying, 'It will be forgiven for us.'"

[*al-A'raf* (7): 169]

And Allāh censures the one who says:

وَلَكِنْ رُدِدْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لِأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا ﴿٣٦﴾

“And I do not think the Hour will occur. And even if I should be brought back to my Lord, I will surely find better than this as a return.”

[*al-Kahf* (18): 36]

Shaddād Ibn Aws (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) reported that: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The astute one is the one who takes himself to account and does actions for after death. The incapable one is the one who allows his self to follow its desires and seeks from Allāh the fulfilment of his own hopes.””¹

Mar‘ūf al-Kirkhī (*raḥimabullāh*) said: “Your hope for mercy from the One Whom you disobey is humiliation and foolishness.” For this reason, Allāh says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا
وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ

“Indeed, those who have believed and those who have emigrated and fought in the cause of Allāh—those expect the mercy of Allāh.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 218]

Which means: they are the ones who deserve to hope, yet this is not just particular to them as others can also hope. You should know that hope is praiseworthy as it encourages action. Despair on the other hand is censured as it averts from action. Thus, the one who knows that a land is barren and that the water is of no benefit and that the seeds will not grow—should leave that land and not tire himself in tending to it.

¹ Tirmidhī, #2577; Ibn Mājah, #4260; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.124; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #7141, 7143; Ṭabarānī, *al-Sagḥīr*, vol.2, p.36; Hākim, *al-Mustadrak*, vol.1, p.57, vol.4, p.325; al-Qaḍā’ī, *Musnad al-Shihāb*, #185—from Shaddād Ibn Aws with a chain of transmission which includes Abū Bakr Ibn Abī Maryam and he is a weak narrator.

As for fear, then it is not contrary to hope rather it is the companion of it as will be explained *insha'Allāh*.

The condition of hope leads to the path of striving with actions and perseverance with good actions regardless of the situation. Of its effects is: the delight of the constant turning to Allāh, cherishing the favour of His invocations and being connected to Allāh with forbearance. These conditions have to emerge for all who hope for things even if what they hope for is from a worldly king or any other person. So then what if these conditions do not even emerge in the right of Allāh? Whenever it does not manifest then the station of hope is unattainable, so whoever hopes to intend good in a way other than with these indications is being deluded.

Section Two:

The Excellence of Hope

It has been relayed in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs² from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy>Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I am as My servant thinks of Me”³ and in another narration: “So let him think of Me as he wills.”

In another ḥadīth relayed by Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “None of you should die except that he has good suspicion of Allāh.”⁴

Allāh revealed to Dāwūd (*'alayhis-salām*): “I love those who love Me

² Bukhārī, vol.13, p.428; Muslim, #2675; and Tirmidhī, #3598

³ Ibn Ḥibbān, #716—from Wāthilah Ibn al-Asqa' (*raḍīy>Allāhu 'anhu*); Aḥmad, vol.3, p.491, vol.4, p.106; Ibn ul-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd*, p.909; al-Dūlābī, *al-Kumā*, vol.2, p.137; Hākim, vol.4, p.240; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, vol.22, p.87—with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

⁴ Muslim, #2877; Abū Dāwūd, #3097; Ibn Mājah, #4167; Aḥmad, vol.3, pp.293, 315, 325, 330, 344, 390; Ibn ul-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd*, p.1034; al-Qaḍā'ī, *Musnad al-Shibāb*, #938; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol.2, p.255—from Jābir (*raḍīy>Allāhu 'anhu*).

and conveys My Love to My creation.' Dāwūd said: 'My Lord, how do I convey Your Love to Your creation?' Allāh said: 'Remember Me with beautiful goodness and mention My goodness and favour.'

Mujāhid (*rahimahullāh*) said: 'On the Day of Judgement a servant will be instructed to be placed into the Hellfire, then the servant will exclaim: 'This was not my thought [of You]!' Allāh will say: 'What was your thought of Me?' The servant will say: 'That you forgive me.' Then Allāh will say: 'Let him go!''

Section Three:

The Treatment of Hope and the Way in which the state of Hope is obtained

Know that the treatment of hope is needed by two types of man:

1. The first type is man who could have been overcome by despair, to the extent that he has abandoned acts of worship
2. The second type is man who has been overcome by fear to the extent that he harms himself and his family

As for the disobedient and deluded wishful thinker of Allāh, who turns away from acts of worship, then it is appropriate to just use fear. The hope to cure him with could actually turn into poison. This is just like how honey is a cure for whoever has been overcome by cold yet harmful for whoever is overcome by heat. Due to this, the admonisher of people has to be subtle, investigate defective instances and treat each defect appropriately. During this time it is inappropriate to use the causes of hope, rather there should be more emphasis on fear. The admonisher mentions the excellence of hope if his intent is to attach the hearts to it and rectify the sick.

'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'The scholar is the one who neither makes the people despair of Allāh's Mercy nor does he make them

feel safe from Allāh's Plot.'

If you know this, then you should know that the causes for hope have arrived via consideration and via narration. As for that which has arrived via consideration: then it is to contemplate all of what we have mentioned about recognising Allāh favours in the '*Chapter of Thankfulness*'. If Allāh's *Latā'if* (subtleties) with His servants are known in the worldly life, and the marvels of His Wisdom which He instilled in peoples natural dispositions, and that His Divine Subtlety is not restricted to His servants minute worldly interests, and that He does not love for them to miss increases in their levels—how can Allāh Love their route to eternal destruction? The one who was subtle in this life will also be in the Afterlife, as the Arranger of each of the two abodes is One and the Same.

As for that which has arrived via the Qur'anic verses and narrations, then of this is when Allāh said:

قُلْ يَاعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا

“Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 53]

And He has said:

وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَن فِي الْأَرْضِ

“and the angels glorify their Lord with praise and ask forgiveness for those who are on the earth.”

[*al-Shūrā* (42): 4]

Allāh informed that He has prepared Hell for His enemies, and to instill fear in His Allies:

لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ
وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ذَلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ يَعْبادُونَ ۖ فَانْقُورُوا ۝

“They will have canopies of fire above them and below them, canopies. By that Allāh threatens His servants. O My servants, then fear Me.”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 16]

And He has said:

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

“And fear the Fire, which has been prepared for the disbelievers.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 131]

And He has said:

فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا
تَلظى ۖ لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى ۖ الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى ۖ

“I have warned you of a Fire which rages, in which only the most wretched will roast—those who denied and turned away.”

[*al-Layl* (92): 14-16]

And He has said:

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى ظُلْمِهِمْ

“And indeed, your Lord is full of forgiveness for the people despite their wrongdoing...”

[*al-Ra’d* (13): 6]

From the narrations are that which has been narrated by Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: I heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say: “Indeed Iblīs said to His Lord: ‘By Your Honour and By

Your Glory I will not cease to delude the children of Ādam so long as their souls remain in their bodies.' Allāh said: 'By My Honour and By My Glory I will not cease to forgive them so long as they seek My Forgiveness.'"⁵

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if you did not sin Allāh would remove you and bring a people who did sin and seek forgiveness for their sin and Allāh would forgive them." Reported by Muslim.⁶

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁷ from 'Ā'ishah (*radi Allāhu 'anhā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "So be firm, be steadfast and give glad tidings, as none of you will enter Paradise by his actions." The companions asked: "Not even you O Messenger of Allāh?" He replied (ﷺ): "Not even me, unless Allāh was to encompass me with His mercy."

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁸ from Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "Allāh will say on the Day of Judgement: 'O Ādam!' Ādam will reply: '*Labbayk wa Sa'dayk, wa'l-Khayr fi Yadayk* [I respond to Your Call, I am obedient to Your Orders and all good is in Your Hands].' Allāh will then say: 'O Ādam rise and extract the people of Hellfire from your offspring!' Ādam will say: 'Who are the people of the Hellfire?' Allāh will say: "Out of every thousand, extract nine hundred and ninety-nine of them [for the Hellfire]." At this, the hair of children will turn grey,

⁵ Aḥmad, vol.3, p.29—with the isnād is Darrāj Abū'l-Samḥ and he is weak in his narrations from Abū'l-Haytham, such as this narration; Aḥmad, vol.3, p.41—and this version of the narration is disconnected.

⁶ Muslim #2739; Aḥmad, #8030, 8068; Hākim, vol.4, p.246; Tirmidhī, #2646.

⁷ Bukhārī, vol.1, p.109; Muslim, #782; Aḥmad, vol.6, pp.125, 273—narrated from a number of Companions (*radīy Allāhu 'anhūm*).

⁸ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.335; and Muslim, #222

وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ
سُكَرَىٰ وَمَاهَمُ بِسُكَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

“and every pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy, and you will see the people [appearing] intoxicated while they are not intoxicated; but the punishment of Allāh is severe.”

[*al-Hajj* (22): 2]

This greatly worried the people [i.e. companions] to the extent that their faces changed and they said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger, who amongst us will be that one out of a thousand?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Give glad tidings, for indeed from among you will be one, while from Ya’jūj and Ma’jūj will be a thousand.” The people said: ‘*Allāhu Akbar!*’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “By Allāh, I hope that you will be a quarter of the people of Paradise. By Allāh, I hope that you will be a third of the people of Paradise. By Allāh, I hope that you will be half of the people of Paradise.” The people made *takbīr* and the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “That day, among the people you will be like the white hairs on a black bull or the black hairs on a white bull.”

See how fear arrives and regardless of its discomfort, and when the hearts feel that they have been assured of desire, they have to be made uncomfortable, and when concern intensifies the hearts have to be made tranquil—so that the matter can be balanced. Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “Allāh will forgive people on the Day of Judgement in a way which people’s hearts cannot imagine.”

It has been reported that a Magian asked Prophet Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhis-salām*) to host him, but he rejected and then Allāh revealed unto Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhis-salām*): “O Ibrāhīm, for ninety years I have been sustaining him while he disbelieves in Me.” Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhis-salām*) strived to seek the person, brought him back, hosted him and told him what Allāh revealed to him. The magian was amazed at Allāh’s Subtlety and then embraced Islām.

These factors which bring the spirit of hope to the hearts of those who fear and despair, as for the foolish and deluded people then they are not attentive to any of that, only that which is related to fear. This is because most of the people will not be rectified except by that.

Section Four: Fear and its Levels

Know that fear (*khauf*) is an expression of the heart's pain and burning due to dislike of [something in] the future. An example of this is with the one who commits a crime against a king and then the king captures him. The person will fear being executed and seek pardon. However, his heart will be in pain due to the strong knowledge that he will likely be executed for his vile crime and how it is regarded by the king. The fear may not be due to the crime, but due to the description of the one who instils such fear, his authority and magnitude.

It is known that Allāh can destroy the worlds and this would be nothing to Him, none can prevent Him. Thus, when a person has knowledge of his own faults, along with knowledge of Allāh's Majesty and Self-Sufficiency, and that Allāh will not be Asked—this instils fear. Those who fear Allāh the most are those who have the most knowledge of their own selves and of Allāh, for this reason the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "I have the most knowledge of Allāh from among you, and I fear Him the most."⁹

And Allāh said:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

"Only those of His slaves with knowledge have fear of Allāh."

[*Fāṭir* (35): 28]

⁹ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.437; Muslim, #2306; and Aḥmad, vol.6, pp.45, 181

When knowledge is perfected, fear will have an impact and will affect the heart and then manifest on the limbs in the form of feeling faint and tears, even resulting in death. It may even reach up to the brain and corrupt the intellect.

As for its manifestation on the limbs then this is via staying away from disobedience, maintaining obedience [to Allāh], rectifying what happened in the past and preparing for the future. Some of them said: ‘Whoever fears [Allāh] will endeavour.’¹⁰

Some others said: ‘The one who fears is not he who cries, rather the one who fears is the one who abandons what he is able.’

From the fruits of fear is that it suppresses desires and delights—and acts of disobedience which are beloved to him become disliked, like how honey becomes disliked if the one who is about to use it knows that it contains a poison. Thus, desires burn with fear, limbs are put under manners and the heart becomes humble and tranquil. Then, pride (*keibr*), rancour (*hiqd*) and envy (*hasd*) leaves him and he starts to accept worry due to his fear. He does not preoccupy himself with others as he is busy being watchful (*murāqaba*), taking himself to account (*muḥāsaba*), striving against his soul (*mujaḥada*) and being miserly (*bukhl*) for his own soul and its moments, taking the soul to account for every thought, step and word which emanates from him. He becomes like one who comes across a lion yet does not know if will fail to see him, and he can escape, or if it will attack him and kill him. He is only concerned with his own self.

The extent and strength of the watchfulness (*murāqaba*) and tak-

¹⁰ This has been verified from the Prophet (ﷺ) and reported by Tirmidhī, #2567; Hākim, vol.4, p.307; al-‘Uqaylī, *al-Du‘afā’*, vol.4, p.383; al-Qaḍā‘ī, *Musnad al-Shihāb*, #406—from Abū Hurayrah with a weak isnād. It has supporting narrations from Ubayy ibn Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) in Hākim, vol.3, p.408; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.8, p.377—and this is ḥasan *insba’ Allāh*. Al-Albānī, concluded it is ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’*, #6098.

ing oneself to account (*muḥāsaba*) depends on the strength of the fear, and the strength of the fear depends on the strength of the knowledge of Allāh, His Attributes, the defects of the soul and its pitfalls and states.

The lowest level of fear, the effects of which manifest in actions, is to prevent falling into prohibitions. If this prevention is in regards to that which is forbidden, this is referred to as '*warā'*'. If the prevention is connected to impartiality and preoccupation with this than with the curiosity of living, this is referred to as '*ṣidq*'.

Section Five: Fear is Allāh's Threat

Know that fear is the threat of Allāh which His servants maintain to persevere with knowledge and action so as to reach the level of those close to Allāh.

Yet with fear can be excess, moderation and deficiency. Moderation is what is praiseworthy and is like whatever poses a threat to an animal.

Excessiveness in regards to fear is not praiseworthy nor is deficiency. This is like who cries upon listening to the verses [of the Qur'ān] yet when this aspect is not perceived the heart goes back to heedlessness—this is deficient fear and it has little benefit, like a weak stick which is used to try to beat a strong animal and does not hurt it whatsoever and is inadequate to be used for sport. This is predominantly the case for most people except for the gnostics (*'arifīn*) and the scholars (*'ulamā*), and I mean by Scholars: those who have knowledge of Allāh and His Verses, their presence is honourable. As for those who merely feign knowledge then they are the most distant of people from fear [of Allāh].

As for the first category then it is excessive fear like the one who transgressed the limits of moderation until he despairs. This is also censured as it prevents action and could even lead to illness and death, and this is not praiseworthy. That which is praiseworthy is that which leads to the objective for which it intends, and whatever falls short in this regard or transgresses the limits is censured. The benefit of fear is caution (*ḥadhr*), abstinence (*waraʿ*), piety (*taqwā*), striving against the soul (*mujahādā*), reflection (*fikr*), remembrance of Allāh (*dhikr*), worship (*taʿabad*) and all aspects which leads to Allāh and are all needed in life, such as good health and sound mind. If any of this is damaged it will be censured.

So if it said: “what do you say about the one who dies out of fear (*kaʿwf*)?”

Answer: His death in that condition means that he will occupy a level which would not be attained if he died without fear, yet if he lived and obtained the levels of knowledge, understanding and practical implementation—that would be better. The best happiness is to have a long life in obedience to Allāh, all which nullifies long-life (*ʿumr*), intellect (*ʿaql*) and goodness (*ṣiḥā*) is deficiency and loss.

Section Six:

The Divisions of Fear

Know that the stations (*maqāmāt*) of the fearful (*ḥabāʾifīn*) differ. There are those who have fear dominate their hearts; those who have fear of being misled by receiving favours; those who fear inclining away from steadfastness and those who are largely overcome by fear of a bad end. The highest level is fear of the *sābiqah* [having precedence] and one's end is a branch of this. Allāh raises in rank whomever He Wills and debases whoever He Wills, Allāh will not be asked about what He Does, He says: “Some are in Paradise, and I

have no concern, and some are in Hellfire and I have no concern.”¹¹

Of the categories of the fearful are those who fear the pangs of death (*saqarāt al-mawt*) or being questioned by Munkar and Nakīr or the punishment of the grave (*‘adhāb al-qabr*).

Of them are those who fear the awe (*hayba*) of standing (*wuqūf*) in front of Allāh, fear discussing their deeds, fear the bridge (*ṣirāṭ*), fear the Hellfire (*nār*) and its states, fear being prevented from Paradise (*jannah*), fear being barred (*ḥijāb*) from Allāh—all of these states are disliked in such a fearful soul and arouse fear.

The highest of these levels is fear from being barred from Allāh, this is the fear of the Gnostics (*‘ārīfīn*), the next level is the fear of the Ascetics (*ṣābiḥīn*) and the Worshippers (*‘ābidīn*).

Section Seven:

Excellence of Fear and Hope: Which is Superior?

The excellence of everything depends on its concern for seeking happiness which is to meet Allāh and gain nearness to Him. Everything which aids in this is virtuous, Allāh says

وَلِمَن خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ

“But for he who has feared the position of his Lord are two gardens...”

[*al-Raḥmān* (55): 46]

¹¹ Part of a ḥadīth reported by Aḥmad, vol.5, p.239 from Mu‘adh; relayed by al-Ḥaythamī, *al-Majma’*, vol.7, p.120 and he said: ‘It contains al-Barā’ Ibn ‘Abdu’llāh al-Ghanawī, Ibn ‘Adiyy said: ‘To me he is closer to being truthful than weak.’ The rest of the narrators are men found in the ṣaḥīḥ except that al-Ḥasan did not hear from Mu‘adh.’

I say: ‘Perhaps al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥaythamī looked at the biography of al-Barā’ Ibn ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn Yazīd who is not the same as al-Ghanawī...’

Refer to the critical editions of *al-Kāmil fi’l-Du‘afā*, vol.2, p.481; al-Mizzī, *Tabḍīb ul-Kamāl*, vol.4, p.39.

And He has said,

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ

“Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him.
That is for those who fear their Lord.”

[*al-Bayyinah* (98): 8]

In a ḥadīth the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If a servant [of Allāh’s] skin shudders out of fear of Allāh his sins fall off from him like leaves from a dry tree.”¹²

In another ḥadīth: “Allāh is not Angry with the one who fears Him.”¹³

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh says: By My Honour and Majesty, I will not combine for My servant two fears or two safe ways. If he feels safe from Me in this worldly life then I will make him fear Me on the Day of Judgement. If he fears Me in the worldly life, I will provide him with safety on the Day of Judgement.”¹⁴

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Two eyes will not at all be touched by the Hellfire: an eye which cries out of the fear of Allāh and an eye which remains open to guard in Allāh’s Path.”¹⁵

¹² Reported by Ṭabarānī, al-Bayhaqī, Ḥakīm in his book *al-Nawādir*, Abū Bakr al-Shāfi‘ī, Sibawayh in his book *al-Fawā'id* and al-Khaṭīb—from al-‘Abbās with a weak chain of transmission, see *Iḥāf al-Sa'ādāt ul-Mutaqarrabīn*, vol.9, p.214.

¹³ I could not find any reference to this within the sources.

¹⁴ Ibn Ḥibbān, #2494 -from Abū Hurayrah with an isnād which is ḥasan; Ibn ul-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd*, p.157 from al-Ḥasan in a mursal form, connected fully by Yahyā Ibn Šā'id in *Zawā'id al-Zuhd*, p.158 from Abū Hurayrah with a weak isnād containing a majhūl narrator. Imām al-Albānī deemed it ḥasan with both a mursal and fully connected route of transmission as found in *Silsilah Aḥādīth as-Ṣaḥīḥah*, p.742, he did not mention the first route.

¹⁵ Tirmidhī, #1639—the isnād contains Shu'ayb Ibn Ruzayq, he is ṣūḍūq yet makes errors. The narration has supporting narrations with the report of Anas found in al-Khaṭīb, vol.2, p.360; Abū Nu'aym, vol.7, p.119; our Shaykh, al-Albānī, authenticated it in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'*, #3990, 3991 and 3992.

You should know that some people say: “Which is better fear or hope?” is like saying “Which is better bread or water?”

The answer is to say: bread is better for the one in starvation, and water is better for the thirsty person. If they are combined then the most probable has to be looked at and if it is found to be the same, then both have the same status. Fear and hope are two cures by which to treat hearts, so their excellence depends on the sickness which is present, so if assurance overcomes a heart more than [fear of] Allāh’s Plot, fear is better [for this particular heart]. Likewise is the case if the hearts have become overcome by despair—hope is better [for those hearts]. Yet it is permissible to say unreservedly that: fear is better [for the hearts] and as is said: bread is better than Sikanjabeen as bread treats the problem of hunger, while Sikanjabeen treats jaundice, but hunger is more dominant and more common and thus the need for bread is more—so it is better in this regard, as disobedience and delusion overcomes people more.

Then if we were to look at the topic of fear and hope, hope is better as it water from the ocean of mercy and fear is from the ocean of anger.

As for the pious one, fear and hope are of the same level and for this reason it is said: ‘If the fear and hope of a believer was weighed on the scales, they would weigh the same.’

Some of the Salaf said: ‘If all the people were called to enter Paradise except one man, I would fear to be that man. And if all the people were called to enter the Hellfire except for one man, I would hope to be that man.’

This has to be how the sincere believing and pious believer is, and if it is said: ‘How can both hope and fear be balanced in the heart of the believer? Should not his hope be stronger due to his piety?’

Answer: the believer is not sure about the accuracy of his actions, he is like one who sow seeds yet has not tried out its type before in a strange land. The seeds are *imān* and the conditions for its accuracy are fine, the earth is the heart which could hide that which is vile out of hypocrisy as the secrets of the character are obscure, and lightening is like the pangs of death—all of this necessitates fear, so how can a believer not have fear?

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who asked Hudhayfah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*): ‘Am I of the hypocrites (*munāfiqīn*)?’¹⁶ He feared delusion due to his condition, and this praiseworthy fear is that which incites action and agitates the heart away from reliance on the worldly life.

As for when death arrives, it is better for a person to have hope as fear is like a threat to encourage action which is unattainable. Hope in this case strengthens his heart and helps him love his Lord, thus it is inappropriate for one to leave this world without loving Allāh, loving to meet Him and having good opinion of Him.

Sulaymān al-Taymī said when death approached him: ‘Inform me of the concessions, so that perhaps I will meet Allāh with good opinion of Him.’

Section Eight:

The Treatment Leading to Fear

This is through two ways:

One is higher than the other, and its similitude is like a boy in his house and then a predatory animal or snake gets into the house. He may not be scared of it and may even stretch out his hand towards

¹⁶ As the Prophet (ﷺ) specified Hudhayfah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with knowledge and understanding of the hypocrites (*munāfiqīn*), see Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, #2779.

it so as to play with it. however, if the boy sees his father flee from it and scared of it, the boy will also flee—his fear is based on agreeing with his father’s reaction, yet the fear of the father is based on knowledge and understanding, while the fear of the boy is based on *taqlid* of his father. If you know this, you should know that fear from Allāh is on two levels:

1. The first level: Fear of Allāh’s Punishment, this fear is held by most of creation and is attained by *īmān* in Paradise and Hellfire and that they are two rewards for obedience and disobedience. This can be weakened if *īmān* is weak or heedless is strong. Heedlessness (*ghafla*) vanishes with reminders (*tadhakkār*) and reflections (*tafakkūr*) on the punishment of the Afterlife, and it increases by looking at the fearful ones and their gatherings, or listening to their reports.
2. The second level: Fear of Allāh, which is the fear which the Scholars who are Gnostics possess, Allāh says,

وَيُحَذِّرُكُمْ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ

“And Allāh warns you of Himself.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 30]

Allāh’s Attributes, Glory unto Him, necessitate awe and fear, the fear being distant from Allāh and from being barred from Him.

Dhu’n-Nūn said: ‘Fear of the Hellfire out of fearing death is like a drop in an ocean, and most of the people have this type of fear’, however it is out of *taqleed* and resembles that boy who feared the snake only due to *taqlid* of his father. As a result, such fear gets weakened as beliefs based on blind following easily become weakened in most cases. This is unless they are strengthened by constantly witnessing the reasons which lead to it and perseverance with its obligations so as to increase acts of obedience, and also by staying away from disobedience. If the servant [of Allāh] rises to the knowledge and

understanding of Allāh he will by necessity fear Him and will be in no need of a cure to instil fear into his heart.

Whoever falls short in this regard has to tread the path of curing himself by listening to the reports and narrations of the fearful ones. He should not hesitate to follow them as they are Prophets, scholars and *awliya'*.

In Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from the ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) who said: Allāh's Messenger was invited to the funeral of a boy from the Anṣār. I said: 'O Allāh's Messenger, is *tūbā* [a tree in Paradise] for this one, he is of Allāh's sparrows in Paradise for he neither comprehended evil nor did he do such. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "O 'Ā'ishah, Allāh has created people for Paradise, He created them while they were in their mothers' wombs. He has also created people for Hell-fire, He created them while they were in their mothers' wombs."¹⁷

Of the marvels which hope manifests is severe fear, Allāh says:

وَأَنِّي لَنَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ ﴿٨٩﴾

"But indeed, I am the Perpetual Forgiver of whoever repents and believes and does righteousness and then continues in guidance."

[TāHā (20): 82]

Allāh connected forgiveness to four conditions for it to be accurate. Of the verses which instil fear is where Allāh says:

وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾

"By time, Indeed, mankind is in loss."

[al-'Asr (103): 1-2]

Then Allāh mentioned four conditions after it with which safety

¹⁷ Muslim #2662; also Nasā'ī, vol.4, p.57; and Abū Dāwūd, #4713

from loss is attained. Allāh also says:

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ
مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

“And if we had willed, We could have given every soul its guidance, but the word from Me will come into effect [that] “I will surely fill Hell with jinn and people all together.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32): 13]

It is well known that if things could be turned back the ambitions would have been extended, yet the past cannot be changed so it is impossible to try to comprehend that, one has to accept. If not for Allāh’s Subtlety with His knowers, and their hearts full of hope, they would have burned due to the fire of fear.

Abū’l-Dardā’ (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘There is no one who is assured in his *īmān* that he will not be dispossessed of it at death except that he will be dispossessed of it.’

When death approached Sufyān al-Thawrī he began to cry and a man said to him: ‘O Abū ‘Abdu’llāh, I see that [this must mean that] you have many sins.’

Sufyān al-Thawrī took some dust in his hand and said: ‘By Allāh, my sins are lesser with me than this, however I fear that *īmān* will be dispossessed from me at death.’

Sahl (*raḥimabullāh*) said: ‘The [true] *murīd* fears to be tested by disobedience, while the ‘*ārif*’ is tested by *kufr*.’

It is reported that one of the Prophets complained to Allāh about hunger and a lack of clothing, then Allāh revealed to him: ‘My servant, are you not pleased that I have protected your heart from dis-

believing in Me that you ask Me for the worldly delights?’ Then the Prophet took some dust and threw it over his head saying ‘Rather, I am pleased, so protect me from *kufṛ*.’

If this is the fear of a bad end which the gnostics had, despite their feet being planted firmly, then how can the weak ones not be fearful?

A bad end has causes prior to death, such as innovation (*bid‘ah*), hypocrisy (*nifāq*), pride (*kibr*) and the likes of such dispraised characteristics. For this reason, the Salaf’s fear of hypocrisy intensified.

Some of them said: ‘If I knew that I was free from hypocrisy it would be more beloved to me than the rising of the sun’ and they did not intend by such statements hypocrisy in belief rather hypocrisy in actions, as relayed in the authentic ḥadīth: “The sign of the hypocrite are three: if he speaks, he lies; if he promises, he breaks it and if he is entrusted, he betrays the trust.”¹⁸

A evil end is on two levels:

1. The first: which is greater, that doubt overcomes the heart, Allāh’s refuge is sought. Or rejection of the pangs of death and its conditions, this necessitates constant punishment.
2. The second: lesser than the above level, that one is displeased with the Divine Decree of Allāh, speaks with aversion about it, is unjust in his bequests or dies while persisting on a sin.

It has been reported that *Shayṭān* is more intense on the children of Ādam at the time of death and says to his supporters: ‘get him, as if this day goes then you will be unable to get him.’

¹⁸ Bukhārī, vol.1, p.83; Muslim, #59; Tirmidhī, #2633; Nasā’ī, vol.8, p.117—from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy-Allāhu ‘anhu*).

It has been reported from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) that he used to supplicate:

« أعوذ بك أن يتخبطني الشيطان عند الموت »

“O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from *Shayṭān* tempting me at death.”¹⁹

Al-Khaṭṭābī said in commenting on the above ḥadīth:²⁰ That is by *Shayṭān* seeking to control a person at that time [of death] and misguiding him and attempting to come between him and *tanba*, or prevent him from leaving transgression, or makes him despair from Allāh's Mercy, he is not pleased with Allāh's Divine Decree.

The means to a bad end cannot be restricted in detail however it is possible to highlight them generally:

An end based on doubt and rejection is caused by innovation and involves believing anything which opposes the truth in regards to Allāh's Essence, whether in regards to His Names or Actions. This could be based on either *taqlīd* or a corrupt view. If the cover is lifted at the time of death the invalidity of what he used to believe in becomes clear to him, and it becomes evident to him also that all of what he believed in likewise had not basis. Whoever believes about Allāh's Attributes in a way which conforms to the path of the Salaf will be free from this danger *insha'Allāh*.

As for an end on disobedience, then its cause is weak *īmān* in the foundation and that bequeaths disobedience which in turns puts out the light of *īmān*. If *īmān* weakens as does the love of Allāh. If the pangs of death begin, *īmān* becomes even weaker due to the feeling of leaving the world. This cause which leads to this kind of end is:

¹⁹ Part of a ḥadīth reported by Aḥmad, vol.3, p.427; Abū Dāwūd, #1552, 1553; Nasā'ī, vol.8, p.282; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, vol.19, p.170—from Abū'l-Yusr Ka'b Ibn 'Amr with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

²⁰ In *Ma'ālim al-Sunan*, vol.2, p.161, ed. Shākir.

love of the world and chasing after it along with weak *īmān*, which itself leads to weak love of Allāh. Whoever finds love of Allāh in his heart is more than his love of the world, then he is further away from this danger. All who die on love of Allāh are like good loving slaves returning to their master, whose joy and happiness is apparent. Whoever's soul departs while being in a dangerous condition of having actions which Allāh rejects or whilst persisting in opposing Allāh, then his arrival is opposite to this and deserves punishment.

Whoever wants the path of safety will dodge the means of destruction, and it has been relayed in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs²¹ from the ḥadīth of Saḥl Ibn Sa'd that Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "A man will do the actions of the people of Hellfire, yet will be from the people of Paradise; and a man will do the actions of the people of Paradise, yet will be from the people of Hellfire." It has also been reported that: "If a servant's soul goes up to the heavens, the angels will say: '*Subḥān Allāh!*' This servant was saved from *Shayṭān*, amazing how he was saved!"²²

If you know the meaning of a bad end you must be cautioned from the means to them and prepare. Woe to you that you procrastinate from such preparation as life is short and your soul could be taken and a person dies upon what he lived and will be resurrected on what he died upon.

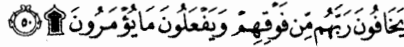
We will now relay unto you the reports of the fearful ones which we hope will remove some hardness from your heart, so that you come know that the Prophets and *awliyā'* were more intelligent than you. So reflect on their intense feat so that perhaps you will prepare yourself.

²¹ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.436; and Muslim, #112

²² I could not find a source for this.

Section Nine:
The Intensity of Fear of the Angels
(peace be upon them)

Allāh says,



“They fear their Lord above them, and they do what they are commanded.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 50]

It has been relayed from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “Unto Allāh are angels who tremble from their fear of Him.”²³

It has reached us that those angles who carry the throne of Allāh weep tears like rivers and when one of them raises his head he says “Glory unto You! Your rightful and deserved fear has not be truly realised.” Allāh will say to him: “However, those who swear by My Name, are liars, do they not know that.”

Jābir (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said that: Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “On the night of my ascension, I saw Jibrīl, ‘*alayhis-salām*, bellowing with tears out of the fear of Allāh.”²⁴

It has reached us that Jibrīl (‘*alayhis-salām*) went to the Prophet (ﷺ) while weeping, it was said to him: “What makes you cry?” Jibrīl replied: “My eyes have not been dry since Allāh created Hell-fire (*jahannam*), my tears are out of fear that I would disobey Him and

²³ I could not find a narration with this wording, however Abū’l-Shaykh relays in *al-‘Udhmah* from Ibn ‘Abbās who said: ‘Jibrīl, ‘*alayhis-salām* on the Day of Judgement will stand before *al-Jabbār*, Glorified and Blessed is He, and he shudders immensely out of fear of Allāh.’ Relayed by al-‘Irāqī in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.181 who said: ‘It contains Zumayl Ibn Simāk al-Hanafī and he needs to be verified.’

²⁴ I did not find this narration among the sources and in the *ṣaḥīḥ* is that which is contrary to this.

He would place me therein.”²⁵

Yazīd al-Raqāshī²⁶ who said: ‘Unto Allāh are angels around the Throne of Allāh and their eyes will flow like rivers on the Day of Judgement out of fear of Allāh. Allāh will say to them: ‘O My angels, what is it that makes you fear when you are with Me?’ The angels will say: ‘O Lord, if only the people of the earth were aware of Your Honour and Magnificence as we have they would not eat, drink or go to sleep in their beds. They would go out to the desert groaning as cows do.’

Muhammad Ibn al-Munkadir said: ‘When the Hellfire was created the hearts of the angels were disturbed, and when Ādam was created they were settled.’

It has been reported²⁷ that when what manifested from Iblīs occurred, Jibrīl and Mikā’īl shed tears and then Allāh inspired to them: ‘What is the reason for these tears?’ They replied: ‘O Lord, we are not safe from Your plan.’ Allāh said to them: ‘This is how you should be.’

Section Ten:

The Intensity of Fear of the Prophets (peace be upon them)

Wahb said: ‘[Prophet] Ādam (*‘alayhis-salām*) cried for three hundred years and did not raise his head to the heavens after committing his mistake.’

²⁵ Relayed by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *al-Khā’ifīn*, also found in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.181, yet I did not see that it had the same wording.

²⁶ He is weak.

²⁷ It is not verified.

Wuhayb Ibn al-Warad said: When Allāh reproached [Prophet] Nūḥ (*‘alayhis-salām*) regarding his son, He said:

إِنِّي أَعْطُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

“I admonish you lest you should be among the ignorant.”

[*Hūd* (11): 46]

Nūḥ cried for three hundred years until lines appeared under his eyes due to crying.

Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: ‘When [Prophet] Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhis-salām*) used to stand to pray a whimper would emanate from him out of fear of Allāh and his crying which could be heard from afar.’

Mujāhid said: ‘When [Prophet] Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*) fell into error he would humbly prostrate before Allāh for forty days to the extent that from the tears which flowed from his eyes leaks sprouted up. Then he would supplicate to his Lord: ‘The forehead has become filled with sores and the eyes have become dry.’

Dāwūd did not return to his sin and then he was called: ‘Are you hungry that you be fed? Are you sick that you be cured? Are you oppressed that you may be supported?’ He cried to an extent to cause all that grew to be carried away and then he was forgiven. It has also been said that: the people would think that Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*) was ill, but rather he was in such a state out of his intense fear of Allāh.

If death was mentioned to [Prophet] ‘Īsā (*‘alayhis-salām*) his skin would start to bleed.

Yahyā Ibn Zakarīyyā (*‘alayhum-salām*) cried to the extent that his molars would be apparent, so his mother used to use two pieces of

cloth and place them on his cheeks.

Section Eleven:

The Intensity of Fear of the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)

‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anḥā*) who said: I never saw Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) laugh loudly for me to see his uvula, but he used to smile. If he saw clouds or winds [concern about] that would be clear from his face. I said: O Messenger of Allāh, when people see the clouds they get happy out of hope for rain, yet with you I see the dislike of it on your face. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “O ‘Ā’ishah, what is the surety that it is not a punishment? A people were punished by the wind. While another people saw a punishment and said about it: “This is a sign of rain.”” Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.²⁸

When the Prophet (ﷺ) used to pray a whimper could be heard from him due to his crying.²⁹

Section Twelve:

The Intensity of Fear of the Companions’
(may Allāh be pleased with them)

We have reported from Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he used to take hold of his tongue and say: ‘This is what has put me into problems.’³⁰

Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) also said: ‘Woe to me, would that I was a tree chopped down and then eaten.’

²⁸ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.444; and Muslim, #899

²⁹ Abū Dāwūd, #904; Tirmidhī, *al-Shamā’i*, p.276; Nasā’ī, vol.3, p.13; Aḥmad, vol.4, pp.25, 26; Ibn Ḥibbān, #522; al-Baghawī, #729—from ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn al-Shikhayyir with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

³⁰ Reported by Mālik, vol.2, p.988; Abū Ya’lā, #5; Ibn us-Sunnī, #7; also relayed by al-Ḥaythamī in *al-Majma’*, vol.10, p.302—it is ṣaḥīḥ.

Likewise was stated by Ṭalḥah, Abū'l-Dardā' and Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu 'anhum*).

'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) would listen to the verses of the Qur'ān and be ill [out of fear of Allāh] for days and the companions would visit me. He once picked up some straw from the ground and said: 'Woe to me, would that I was this straw. Woe to me, would that I was nothing. Woe to my mother, that she had given birth to me.'

'Umar used to have two lines under his eyes from crying.

'Uthmān (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'I wish that when I die I will not be resurrected.'

Abū 'Ubaydah Ibn al-Jarrāḥ (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'I wish that I were a lamb to be sacrificed by my family who would eat my flesh and then use me as sauce.'

'Imrān bin Ḥusayn said: 'Woe to me, would that I was sand scattered by the wind.'

Hudhayfah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'I wish that I had a person to look after my wealth and property, then I would lock the door of my house and not allow anyone in until I meet Allāh, Mighty and Majestic.'

Tears dug into the cheeks of Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) like a channel due to his crying.

'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) stated: 'Woe to me, that I was person forgotten.'

'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'By Allāh, I saw the Companions of

Muḥammad (ﷺ) and today I do not see anyone even remotely resemble them. They would awake dishevelled, they would stay up the night in prostration and standing [in prayer], reciting Allāh's Book, when they would awake they would remember Allāh and they would be shaken like trees on a windy day and their eyes would shed tears to the extent that their clothes would become wet. By Allāh, it is as if the people [today] have become heedless.'

Section Thirteen:

**The Intensity of Fear of the Successors
(may Allāh have mercy upon them)**

Hārim ibn Hayyān³¹ said: 'By Allāh, I wish that I were a tree eaten by a camel and then excreted than be held accountable on the Day of Judgement. Indeed I fear the major event.'

When 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn would make wudu he would turn yellow and change, it would be said to him: 'What's wrong with you?' He would reply: 'Do you truly comprehend in front of Whom we are to stand in prayer?'

Muḥammad ibn Wāsi' used to cry most of the night and he would almost never eat in the morning.

If death was mentioned 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Azīz he would cry until his beard flowed with tears. On one night he cried, as did the people of his home and his daughter Fāṭimah said to him: 'O my father, O leader of the believers, why do you cry?' He replied: 'I remembered the people's departure after being brought to account in front of Allāh, a party in Paradise and a party in Hellfire.' He screamed and then fell unconscious.

³¹ See Ibn al-Jawzī, *Sifat ul-Safwah*, vol.3, p.137

When al-Manṣūr went to *al-Quds* [Jerusalem], he stayed with a monk with whom ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz used to also stay. He said to him: ‘Inform me of the amazing things which you used to see from ‘Umar.’ The monk replied: ‘One time he stayed over and slept on the roof of my room here. I noticed some water coming down the drain pipe from the roof. I went up and found that ‘Umar was in prostration and the tears from his eyes were coming down the pipe.’

We have reported that both ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz and Faṭḥ al-Mawṣilī would cry blood [from the fear of Allāh].

Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Īsā al-Yashkurī said: ‘I visited a man from Bahrain who had withdrawn from the people and had dedicated himself to his own self. I reminded him of something about the Afterlife and also death, and then the man sighed until his soul departed.’

Mismā’ said: ‘I witnessed ‘Abdu’l-Wāḥid ibn Zayd while he was giving an admonition and four people died in that gathering.’

Yazīd ibn Murshid used to cry a lot and say ‘By Allāh, if my Lord had threatened to imprison me in a steam bath, it would be my right to not stop weeping. How could this not be the case when He has threatened to imprison me in Hellfire if I disobey Him?!’

Al-Sarī al-Saqāṭī said: ‘I look at my nose everyday out of fear that my face would be become darkened [from being burnt in Hellfire].’

These narrations demonstrate the fear of the angels, prophets, scholars and *awliyā’* and we are more deserving of being fearful than them. However, fear is not gained by having many sins rather by having pure hearts and perfected understanding. We are safe due to our immense ignorance and the strength of the hardness of our hearts.

The pure heart is moved by even the slightest amount of fear, while the hard heart is not affected by any admonition.

One of the Salaf said: 'I said to a monk: advise me. He said: 'If you are able to assume the rank of a man who is about to be eaten by a carnivorous animal who fears that it will attack him or eat him. If you are able then you should do so.' Give me some more advice. The monk said: 'For the thirsty one, just a little amount of water suffices.'

What the monk mentioned is in regards to a person who is about to be devoured by a wild animal yet in reality it is in regards to a believer. Whoever looks at his inner self with the light of insight will view that it is prone to attack from wild and depraved animals such as anger (*ghaḍab*), hatred (*hiqā*), envy (*ḥasad*), pride (*kibr*), self-amazement (*ʿujb*), showing off (*riyā*) etc. All of these traits attack him, yet in his life he is veiled from witnessing them. If the cover is removed and he is placed into the grave they sting him like snakes and scorpions would, yet this is his state currently. So whoever wants to conquer this before death and kill it should do so, if not then he would have exposed his heart to being bitten by the poison not to mention his outer skin and safety.

THE FOURTH FOUNDATION

On Asceticism and Poverty (*al-zuhd wa'l-faqr*)

Know that love of the world (*hubb al-dunyā*) is at the peak of every sin¹ and some of its causes for each act of disobedience. Censure of the world (*dhamm al-dunyā*) was mentioned prior and how it destroys in the fourth quarter. Now we will mention the merit of hating the world and having *zuhd* in it—as it is the peak of salvation.

Cutting off from it can be via it being removed for the servant and this is called 'poverty' (*faqr*); or it is via the servant removing himself from it and this is called 'asceticism' (*zuhd*). Each one is a level of happiness and is an amount of helping to gain success and salvation. We will mention poverty and asceticism, their levels and categories.

¹ This has been relayed in a weak ḥadīth about which al-Munāwī discussed in *Fayd ul-Qadīr*, vol.2, p.365

Section One:

Poverty

Know that the one in poverty (*faqīr*) is in need of something and all are poor except Allāh.

As for the poverty of the servant of Allāh in relation to the kinds of needs then it cannot be restricted. Some of his needs can be attained by wealth. A person can have five states in regards to poverty:

The first state is if wealth is given to him he dislikes that and regards it as something which may harm him. He flees from taking it out of hatred (*bughd*) of it and so as to protect himself from its evil and preoccupation; the person with this condition is referred to as being ‘abstinent’ (*zāhid*).

The second state is that he has no desire (*raghbā*) which involves joy when obtaining it, and no dislike of not obtaining it, the person of this condition is referred to as being ‘pleased’ (*rādiyān*).

The third state is that the presence of wealth is more beloved to him than its absence due to his desire for it. However, his desire for it does not lead him to apply himself to acquire (*talab*) it. Indeed, if he is given it fortuitously he takes it and is happy with it, and if he becomes poor due to tiredness in acquiring it he does not preoccupy himself to acquire it. The person of this condition is referred to as being ‘contented’ (*qāni‘ān*).

The fourth state is that he abandons seeking to acquire it due to his inability (*‘ajz*) despite him desiring it, and if he finds a way to acquire it via tiredness he would take it. The person of this condition is referred to as a person of ‘avarice’ (*harīṣ*).

The fifth state is that he is desperate to acquire it such as a starving person who needs food or a barely clothed person who needs clothing. The person of this condition is referred to as being ‘desperate’ (*mudtarān*).

The loftiest of the above states is the first one: *zuhd*. There is however a state after it which is loftier, which is that when wealth is present and when it is not are the same with him. If it is there he is not joyous, and if it is not he does not worry. As we have reported from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) that wealth came to her in two wooden chests and she distribute it one day [among the poor]. Her servant-girl asked her: ‘Were you not able to buy some meat for us for breakfast for a *dirham*?’ She said: ‘If you reminded me I would have.’

Whoever is of this condition would not be harmed if even the entire world was put in their hands as they view wealth and property as being of Allāh’s treasury and not for their own selves to consume.

The person of this condition has to be known as ‘sufficient’ (*mustagnī*) as he suffices from the absence of wealth and its presence as well.

When the abstinent (*zāhid*) in the world neither desires its presence nor misses its absence—this is of the utmost completion.

Aḥmad ibn Abū’l-Ḥawārī said to Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī: Mālik ibn Dīnār said to al-Mughīrah: ‘Go to the public treasury and take the *zakāt* which you have given me, as *Shayṭān* has whispered to me that a thief has taken it.’ Abū Sulaymān said: ‘This is of weak *zuhd*,²

² This is a typo error from Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī and it should be “his provisions [*zādah*] in the *dunyā* were more than him having to take it”.

as he had been abstemious in the world so he should have taken it.’

Fleeing from wealth and *zuhd* in the right of the weak and poor is completion. As for the Prophets and the strong, then it is the same with them whether it [wealth] is there or not.

Section Two:

The Merit of Poverty, its Preference over Sufficiency

As for the Qur’ānic verses, then Allāh has praised the poor people,

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“[Give] to those needy who are wholly occupied in Allāh’s way.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 273]

And He says,

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ

“The poor emigrants who were driven from their homes and possessions.”

[*al-Hashr* (59): 8]

As for the reports then they are many, such as the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: “I stood by the door of Paradise and saw that most of those entering it were poor people, while the wealthy people were being detained.” The complete ḥadīth is in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.³

Also the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “O Allāh, make the provision of

³ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.361; Muslim, #2736; Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.205, 209; al-Baghawī, no.4063; Nasā’ī, *al-Kubrā* as found in *Tuhfat ul-Asbrāf*, vol.1, p.50; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #421—from Usāmah Ibn Zayd.

Muḥammad's family mere subsistence."⁴

The ḥadīth of 'Ā'ishah (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhā*) wherein she said: 'Muḥammad's family have not eaten to their full with the bread of wheat for three consecutive nights since it arrived in Madīnah until his death.'⁵

Muslim⁶ relayed from 'Umar (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhū*) who said: "I saw Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) at times he could not even find bad quality dates with which to fill his stomach."

Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhū*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The poor believing people will enter Paradise before the wealthy believers by five hundred years." Tirmidhī said⁷: the ḥadīth is ṣaḥīḥ.⁸

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to 'Ā'ishah (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhā*): "Beware of sitting with the wealthy."⁹

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said: "The servant [of Allāh] will arrive on the Day of Judgement and Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will excuse him just as a man excuses another man in the worldly life. Allāh will Say to him: 'By My Honour and Majesty, I have not removed the world from you on account of your humility unto Me, but rather due to the *Karāmah* [dignity] which I have prepared for you. Go My servant unto those ranks, whoever feeds or clothes you, seeking by

⁴ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.250; Muslim, #1055; Tirmidhī, #2362.

⁵ Bukhārī, vol.9, p.478; Muslim, #2970—also relayed from Abū Hurayrah.

⁶ Muslim, #2978

⁷ In his *Sunan* it actually says: "this ḥadīth is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ."

⁸ Reported by Tirmidhī, #2354; Ibn Mājah, #4122; Ibn Hibbān, #2567—with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

⁹ Tirmidhī, #1781—in the isnad is Ṣāliḥ Ibn Ḥassān and he is matrūk [an abandoned narrator and thus not utilised in narration], compare with the comments to *Jāmi' ul-'Usūl* (Shām Print), vol.4, p.671.

that My Face, take him by the hand as he is for you.”¹⁰

Mūsā (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: ‘If you see a poor person approaching say to him: ‘Welcome as you have the banner of the righteous!’ and if you see a wealthy person approaching say to him: ‘A punishment which has been brought forward in this life to punish you.’

Abu’l-Dardā’ said: ‘The account of the one who possesses two dirhams is more intense than the account of one who possesses one dirham.’

The poor were given priority over the wealthy in the gatherings of Sufyān ath-Thawrī.

A man offered Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham ten thousand *dirhams* yet Ibrāhīm did not accept it saying: ‘Do you want my name to be erased from the registry of the poor? I will not have it.’

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “*‘Tūbā* [a tree in Paradise] is for whoever is guided to Islām and his means of living is basic and he is satisfied with what has been given to him by Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic.”¹¹

We mentioned in the chapters on ‘contentment’ (*qāna‘a*) and ‘the dispraise of greed’ (*dhamm al-ḥirṣ*) and ‘covetousness’ (*ṭama‘*) in the chapter of ‘the dispraise of wealth’ (*dhamm al-māl*), that which suffices us from repeating that again here.

As for the preference between the rich (*ghani*) and the poor (*faqīr*),

¹⁰ Al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.197: “Abū’l-Shaykh reported it in *Kitāb uth-Thawāb* from the ḥadīth of Anas with a weak isnād.” As for the first ḥadīth then it has been relayed from Abū Nu‘aym in *al-Hilyah*, refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā’*, vol.9, p.278.

¹¹ Reported by Ibn ul-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd*, p.553; Aḥmad, vol.6, p.19; Tirmidhī, #2453; al-Ḥākim, vol.1, p.34; al-Qaḍā‘ī, *Musnad al-Shihāb*, #616; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, vol.18, p.786—it is ṣaḥīḥ, refer to *Silsilah Aḥādīth as-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #129 and 1506.

then what is apparent from the transmitted texts is that the poor is preferred. However, there has to be some detailed explanation here. So we say: doubt and difference could be apparent regarding the poor and patient (*sābir*) who is not greedy, and the wealthy person who has gratitude (*shākir*) to Allāh and spends out his wealth for good (*khayrāt*); or the poor person who is greedy (*ḥarīṣ*) with the wealthy person who is greedy. There is no doubt that the poor person who is contented is better than the wealthy person who is greedy and gluttonous. Yet the rich person who spends out his wealth for good is better than the poor and gluttonous person. If the rich person has covetousness and spends his wealth on permissible things then the poor and contented person is better than him.

Lifting the lid on this matter is for other factors and not on its own merits and this has to be included in its objective so that the preference can be apparent. The world is not cautioned against (*mabdhūr*) in and of itself rather due to it posing an obstacle to attain Allāh's [pleasure]. Poverty is not sought-after (*maṭlūb*) in and of itself, rather within it is removal of the obstacle unto Allāh and does not involve preoccupation away from Allāh.

How many a rich people were not preoccupied from Allāh's remembrance, such as Sulaymān (*'alayhis-salām*), 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (*raḍiy-Allāhu 'anhū*) and 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān ibn 'Awf (*raḍiy-Allāhu 'anhū*).

And how many a poor people were preoccupied due to their poverty from attaining the objective (*maqṣūd*), which averted them from the love (*ḥubb*) of Allāh and intimacy (*uns*) with Allāh? The preoccupation was due to love of the world which cannot combine with the love of Allāh. As indeed, the one who loves a thing becomes preoccupied with it whether he is separated from it or in communication with it, and the preoccupation could be greater when separated from it.

The world is the longing of the heedless (*ghāfilūn*), the one who is unable to attain it becomes preoccupied to attain it, while the one able to attain it becomes preoccupied with indulging in it. The poor are more distant from this danger as the *fitnah* of wealth is more intense than the *fitnah* of poverty, and protection is to not have it. As this is the nature of humans, except for a few of them, the Divine Legislation has come to censure wealth (*ghina*) and prefer poverty (*faqr*), and the indications of its preference were mentioned prior.

Such as what has been reported from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ): “Two believers will meet at the gate of Paradise: a rich one and a poor one. They both lived in the world. The poor one will enter Paradise while the rich one will be detained as Allāh wills, and then he will enter Paradise. The poor person will meet him and ask him: ‘O my brother, what detained you? By Allāh, I was waiting patiently until I feared for you.’ The rich believer will say: ‘O my brother, I was detained after you and I did not reach you until I sweated that which could fill a thousand vessels for supplying water for camels...’”¹²

Know that separating from a beloved one is difficult, yet if you were to love the world you will hate to meet (*liqā’*) Allāh and your arrival to death will be as your hate, and your departure from what

¹² Aḥmad, vol.1, p.304; al-Ḥaythamī, *al-Majma’*, vol.10, p.263 and he said: ‘Aḥmad reported it and with it is a ‘*Duwayd*’ who is not documented. If he is the one who reports from Sufyān then al-‘Ijlī has mentioned him in *Kitāb al-Thiqāt*, yet I do not know him, the remainder of men are narrators in the ṣaḥīḥ, except for Muslim Ibn Bashīr who is thiqah.’

I say: ‘in the *Musnad* is a narrator Salm, Shaykh ‘Abdu’l-Razzāq al-Bannā stated in *al-Fatḥ al-Rabānī*, vol.19, p.122: ‘I did not come across a biography for either Salm or Muslim in the books detailing the narrators.’

I also say: al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr mentioned Salm Ibn Bashīr in *al-Ta’jīl*, p.158 and mentioned a Sālīm who has been mentioned earlier in the book. In the biography of Sālīm Ibn Bashīr (p.144) Ibn Ḥajr said: ‘from ‘Ikrimah and from him Duwayd al-Khurasānī who is majhūl.’

I say: ‘this is an error due to a print error as rather it is Salm with a *sukūn* on the *lām* after which is letter *mīm*. Thus, Ibn Ḥajr did not mention anything other than what was mentioned above about Salm.

you loved. Whoever departs from a beloved thing is harmed by this departure based on his love (*ḥubb*) and (*uns*) intimacy to it. Therefore, it is a must for you to love the One Who will not leave you, Allāh, and do not love that which will leave you, which is the world.

Section Three:

The Manners of the Poor with his Poverty

He should not dislike the poverty which Allāh has tried him with, it is much better to be pleased (*rāḍin*) and happy (*fariḥ*) with this and trust (*mutawakkil*) in Allāh. When he is contrary to this, and complains to people and not to Allāh, his poverty is a punishment in regards to him. He should not complain, rather he should manifest chastity and beauty, Allāh says,

يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمُ الْتَّعَافُفُ

“An ignorant [person] would think them self-sufficient because of their restraint.”

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 273]

The poor one should neither show humility in front of a rich person merely on account of his wealth nor should he seek to sit with him. He also should not abstain from worship on account of his poverty, and not be prevented from spending out in charity what he is able and that is (*jubd ul-maqal*). Abū Dharr (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that he asked the Prophet (ﷺ): “O Messenger of Allāh, which charity is best?” The Prophet (ﷺ): “That which is given by the poor.”¹³

¹³ Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.178, 179; Ṭayālīsī, #478; and al-Ḥaythamī relayed it in *al-Majma‘*, vol.3, p.116 and said: ‘within it is Abū ‘Amr al-Dimishqī and he is matrūk.’

I say: ‘al-Mas’ūdī is weak due to his confusion and muddling up narrations.’

Section Four:

The Manners of a Poor when Accepting Gifts

If any wealth comes to him without him asking for it then three things have to be bore in mind:

1. The type of wealth
2. The intent of the giver
3. The intent of the receiver

First: as for the type of wealth, then it has to be absolutely free of anything doubtful (*shububāt*),¹⁴ otherwise he should be warned from accepting it. In the ‘chapter on the *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*’ the levels of doubt were mentioned and what should be refrained from and what is recommended. As for from the side of the giver, in seeking love, like giving presents and gifts, and in these cases there is no problem in accepting them as long as they are not bribes.

Second: that the intent of the giver is to gain the reward [from Allāh], as in the case of giving alms (*ṣakāt*) and charity (*sadaqa*). The one receiving it should look at his own characteristics and as to whether he is worthy or not and if there is any doubt as to his eligibility. If he has been given charity, and it was given by someone due to the religion of the poor person, then the receiver should check himself and if any act of disobedience which he commits, if the giver knew, would prevent him from taking it—in such cases he should not take it.

Third: that the intent of the giver is mere fame (*shubra*), showing off (*riyāʾ*) and repute (*sumʿa*). If these are the intents of one who gives wealth then such wealth should be given back to him and it should not be taken. If the poor one accepts it, it will render him as

¹⁴ Imām al-Shawkānī has a treatise entitled *Kashf ul-Shububāt ʿan al-Mushtabihāt*.

an aider of corrupt intent (*qaṣd al-fāsid*). As for his intent in accepting it, then the poor one has to look at his own condition and if he is need of it or can suffice without it. If he can suffice without having to take it then he should not take it, yet if he is in need of it, and is safe from any doubts and obstacles which we have mentioned, then it is better for him to take it. This is based on what has been relayed from 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhū*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "If you are given something from this wealth and property without asking for it or coveting it, then take it." Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.¹⁵

In another ḥadīth: "Whatever good comes to him from his brother without coveting it or asking for it should accept it and not reject it, as it is provision from Allāh which has come to him."¹⁶

Section Five:

An Exposition on the Prohibition of Asking without a Need, and the Manners of the Desperately Poor When he Asks

Know that there are questions in regards to the prohibition of begging and some which allow it. In regards to the allowance then this is based on the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: "A beggar has a right to be given something even if he arrives on a horse"¹⁷ and in another narration: "give to the one who asks even if be a burnt hoof."¹⁸ If

¹⁵ Bukhārī, vol.13, p.134; and Muslim, #1045

¹⁶ Aḥmad, vol.4, p.220; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #4124; Abū Ya'la, #925—from Khālīd Ibn 'Adiyy with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād; relayed by al-Ḥaythamī, *al-Majma'*, vol.3, p.100; Ibn Ḥajr, *al-Iṣābah*, vol.3, p.64 and he deemed it as ṣaḥīḥ.

¹⁷ Aḥmad, vol.1, p.200; Abū Dāwūd, #1665; Abū Ya'la, vol.1, p.312; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #2893; al-Qadā'ī, *Musnad al-Shibāb*, #285—from al-Ḥusayn Ibn 'Alī and within the isnād is some Jahālah. Refer to al-Midrāsī, *Ḍhayl ul-Qawl ul-Musaddad*, pp.68, 70

¹⁸ Mālik, vol.2, p.220; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.70, vol.6, p.435; Nasā'ī, vol.5, p.81; Ibn Hibbān, #825; Bukhārī, *al-Tārikh al-Kabīr*, vol.3, p.1, #262; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, vol.24, pp.555, 556, 557, 558; al-Bayhaqī, vol.4, p.177; al-Qadā'ī, *Musnad al-Shibāb*, #929 from 'Ā'ishah (*radiy Allāhu 'anhā*) with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād. Also reported from other Companions.

asking was *ḥarām* it would not be permitted to help a transgressor on his transgression.

As for the traditions from the Prophet (ﷺ) which prohibit asking for money: what was reported from 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "A man will not cease asking others until he meets Allāh without any flesh on his face."¹⁹

Also in the Two *Ṣaḥīḥs* is that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned to refrain from asking people for money by saying: "The upper hand is better than the lower hand."²⁰

In the ḥadīth from Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Whoever asks while having that which suffices him will see his asking come on the Day of Judgement like a scar or blemish on his face." The ḥadīth is ḥasan²¹ and there are other traditions with the same meaning.

Thus, in lifting the lid on this topic we can say: asking, or begging, in origin is *ḥarām* as it is not free from three matters:

1. The first: complaining
2. The second: degrading himself and it is inappropriate for a believer to degrade himself²²
3. The third: the harm of the one being asked, which occurs in most cases

¹⁹ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.268; and Muslim, #1040.

²⁰ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.265; Muslim, #1035; Tirmidhī, #2465; Nasā'ī, vol.5, p.101—from Hakīm Ibn Ḥizām (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), also from other Companions.

²¹ Abū Dāwūd, #1626; Tirmidhī, #650; Nasā'ī, vol.5, p.97; Ibn Mājah, #1840; al-Dārimī, vol.1, p.386—the ṣaḥīḥ is isnād.

²² This has been authenticated in marfū' form reported by Tirmidhī, #2255; Aḥmad, vol.5, p.405; Ibn Mājah, #4016; al-Qadā'ī, #866—from Hudhayfah and it contains weakness. Yet it does have other routes which strengthen it which were reported by Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr*, #13507; Abū'l-Shaykh, *al-Amthāl*, p.153; al-Qadā'ī, #867—the ḥadīth is ḥasan *insha'Allāh*. See *Silsilah Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, vol.2, p.173.

Only in cases of dire necessity or an important need which is close to being a dire necessity.

As for the one who is desperate then he is like a beggar who is starving and fears that he will either die or fall ill, or the one who has no clothing and nothing adequate to wear to clothe himself. The one who has an important need then he is like a person who has a robe (*jubba*) but no shirt (*qamis*) to wear underneath is during winter and suffers from the cold. Also like someone who is unable to walk except with difficulty, it is allowed for him to ask people for money so as to ride on a means of transport, yet initially he should not ask. And like one who finds bread yet needs butter with it, he can ask someone for butter but this is disliked. In this issue thankfulness to Allāh has to be manifest.

He has to also ask his parents, relatives, or close friends, essentially those who will not look down on him for asking. Or he can ask a generous person who gives his money for noble projects. If he asks these categories of people he will leave the scope of humiliation. If he takes it from someone whom he knows only gave it to him out of being shy [to refuse] then it is not allowed for him to take it and he should return it to the one who gave it to him. It is not allowed for the poor person to ask except only for the amount which he needs, for a house which he needs to live in, for a garment to cover him and for the food which keeps his back straight. If he knows that he will find someone to ask every day, it is not allowed for him to ask more than for his need in the day.

If he fears that he will not be able to find anyone to give him, or he fears that he will be unable to ask, it is allowed for him to ask for more than that. It is not allowed for him generally to ask for more than is enough for him for his yearly need. This is in application of the ḥadīth wherein wealth was estimated as having fifty *dirhams*.²³ as

²³ Part of a ḥadīth from Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy. Allāhu 'anhu*) which has been mentioned prior.

sufficing a single person for a year, but not for one with a family.

Section Six:

States of Those Who Ask

Bishr al-Hāfi said: ‘The poor are three: One: The poor one who does not ask, and if he is given he does not take it, this person is of the (*Zuhd*) spiritual people. Two: the poor one who does not ask, yet if he is given he takes it. Three: the poor one who asks when he needs, the expiation of his asking is his truthfulness when asking.

Shaykh Jamāluddīn (*rahimahullāh*) said: ‘I say: the clear statement is that whenever the poor one is able to go without asking, it is not permitted for him to ask. If however, it is difficult for him to cope, there has to be some consideration. If he is unable to bear it, it is allowed for him to ask, yet to not do so is more meritorious.’

Sufyān al-Thawrī said: ‘Whoever is starving and does not ask until he starves to death, will enter the Hellfire.’

Section Seven:

The Nature and Merits of Asceticism, with a
Mention of its Levels and Divisions

Know that *zuhd* in the world is a noble rank (*maqām sharīf*) of the *sālikīn*, and *zuhd* is an expression of averting from the desire of something to that which is better than it. That which is sought-after has to have the condition that in and of itself it is sought-after. Thus, whoever turns away from something which is neither desired nor wanted in and of itself, is not a ‘ascetic’ *ṣāhid*.

Usually, the name “*ṣāhid*” is specifically applied to the one who

renounces the worldly life and the one who has renounced everything except Allāh—this is the complete ascetic. Also, the one who renounces the worldly life and has a desire for Paradise and its favours is similarly an ascetic, yet not as the same level as the former.

Know that abandoning wealth and property in totality is not *zuhd*, nor is spending wealth in vanities. Rather, *zuhd* is to renounce the world with the knowledge of its inferiority in relation to the Afterlife.

The one who knows that the world is like ice which melts away and that the Afterlife is like a pearl which remains will be able to strengthen his desire to sell this for that! Allāh's saying indicates this where He says:

قُلْ مَنْعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَى

“Say: ‘the enjoyment of this world is little, and the Afterlife is better for he who fears Allāh.’”

[*al-Nisā*’ (4): 77]

And He says:

مَا عِنْدَكُمْ يَنْفَدُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

“Whatever you have will end, but what Allāh has is lasting.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 96]

From the merits of *zuhd* is, as He says:

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْتَنَاهُ ۖ زُجَّاجٍ مِّنْهُم زُخْرُ الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْسِهِمْ فِيهِ

“And do not extend your eyes toward that by which We have given enjoyment to [some] categories of them, [its being but] the splendour of worldly life by which We test them.”

[*TāHā* (20): 131]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever awakes and his concern is the worldly life, Allāh will have his affairs shattered and his livelihood split up, and his poverty will be placed before his very eyes. Nothing from the world will come to him except that which Allāh’s has decreed. Yet the one who awakes and his concern is the Afterlife, then Allāh will enfold his concern, preserve his livelihood and placed wealth before his eyes and the world will come to him easily and with pleasure.”²⁴

Al-Ḥasan said: ‘The people will be gathered [on the Day of Judgement] naked except for the people of *zuhd*.’

He also said: ‘A people that honoured this world and it captured them. So you should dishonour it and not let it dishonour you.’

Al-Fuḍayl said: ‘All evil is to be found in a house whose keys are love of the world. And all good has been put in a house whose keys are *zuhd* in the world.’

Some of the Salaf used to say: ‘*Zuhd* in the world brings comfort to the heart and body, while desiring the world increases worry (*hamm*) and grief (*huzn*).’

Section Eight:

The Levels of Asceticism and its Divisions

Of the people are those who have *zuhd* in the world while still desiring it, they strive against their own souls and this is known as ‘*tazāhhud*’ [striving to renounce the world and its delights] and is the beginning of *zuhd*.

²⁴ Ibn Mājah, #4105; Ahmad, vol.5, p.183; Ibn Ḥibbān, #72—from Zayd Ibn Thābit (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

The second level is to renounce the world voluntarily and his soul is not burdened by that. However, he can look at his own *zuhd* and begin to be pleased with himself and could fall into '*ujb* [self-aggrandizement and self-praise]. He views that he has abandoned something which has value for something which has more value, like one who abandons a dirham in order to take two dirhams, this is also a deficiency.

The third level is more loft, it is to renounce the worldly delights voluntarily and to have *zuhd* in his *zuhd*. He does not view that he has abandoned anything as he knows that the world is nothing, he is like one who abandons a rag and takes a jewel—he does not view that there is any contradiction as the world in relation to the favours of the Afterlife are better than a dirty rag in comparison to a jewel. This is perfection in *zuhd*.

Know that the similitude of the one who abandons the world is like one who is prevented from entering to gate of a king's palace by a guard dog. He throws a piece of bread to the dog and while the dog is occupied with eating it he is able to sneak in and see the king. Do you think that he sees himself as aiding the king by giving that dog bread to eat?

The dog represents *Shayṭān* at the door to Allāh, preventing people from entering even though the door is wide open and the chamberlain absent. The world is like the piece of bread which he abandons so as to get to the king's honour. If a person was to live for a thousand years whatever he would earn is nothing compared to the Afterlife, what is ephemeral cannot be compared to that which remains forever, how is this not the case when life is short and its delights are unpleasant (*mukaddirah*).

As for the types of *zuhd*, then in regards to the reasons for which

it is sought, then these are three levels:

1. The first level: *Zuhd* for salvation from punishment, accountability and conditions which are in front of humans. This is the *zuhd* of the fearful ones (*khā'ifīn*).
2. The second level: *Zuhd* out of desiring the reward and the promised favours. This is the *zuhd* of the hopeful ones (*rājīn*), they have abandoned favours for favours.
3. The third level: The most lofty level, which is to not having *zuhd* in the world so as to be free of pain or to achieve delights (*ladhāt*), rather so as to seek meeting (*liqā'*) with Allāh. This is the *zuhd* of the mindful knowers of Allāh (*muḥsinīn al-ʿārifīn*). The delight of seeing (*naẓr*) Allāh, Glorious and Exalted is He, in regards to the delight of Paradise is like the delight of possessing and owning worldly vanities in relation to the delight of possessing a sparrow and playing with it.

Section Nine:

A Detailed Explanation of Asceticism and How it is a Dire Necessity of Life

The dire necessities are seven: food (*maṭ'am*), clothing (*malbas*), accommodation (*maskan*), furniture (*athātha*), marriage (*mankah*), wealth (*māl*) and status (*jāh*).

1. As for the first: food (*maṭ'am*), then you should know that the ascetic's concern with it is in so far as he deflects hunger and starvation based on his bodily need rather than enjoying food. In one hadeeth it is mentioned: "The servants of Allāh do not have easy lives."²⁵

²⁵ Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.243, 244; Abū Nu'aym, vol.5, p.155—from Mu'adh (*raḍīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) said to ‘Urwah: ‘Crescent, after crescent, after crescent used to pass by us and we did not have any fire for cooking in the house of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). He used to say (ﷺ): “O my aunt, then how do you want to live?” She said: “With the two black things: water and dates.”²⁶

There are many other famous traditions on this.

Many of the ‘ascetics’ (*ṣūḥḥād*) detested eating and some of them even loathed it. Sufyān al-Thawrī used to eat well and at times may have even carried some grilled meat in his bag and some *fālūdhaj*.²⁷

In general, the ascetic is satisfied with what is enough for his body and he does not seek enjoyment with eating, yet bodies are different as some are unable to cope with coarse food. Some people may even store lawful provisions due to their *taqwā*, this does not expel him from *ṣūḥd*.

Al-Sabṭī used to work from Saturday to Saturday and had *taqwā*. While Dāwūd al-Ṭā’ī inherited twenty *dirhams* and spent it over twenty years.

2. Clothing (*malbas*), the ascetic suffices with clothing which averts the heat [in summer] and the cold [in winter], and covers his *‘awrah*. There is no problem in him having clothes which he keeps for adornment as long as they do not lead to fame. The clothes of most of the Salaf were coarse, then coarse clothing became for show and repute.

It has been reported from Abū Burdah that he said: ‘Ā’ishah

²⁶ Bukhārī, vol.9, p.478; Muslim, #.2970; Ahmad, vol.6, pp.71, 86

²⁷ A type of sweet made from flour, water and honey.

Translator’s Note: *Fālūdhaj* is a sweet dish still popular today in the Middle East and Persia, it is made from eggs, butter, ground almonds, sugar/honey and rose water.

(*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) gave us a piece of woollen cloth and an *iẓār*²⁸ and then she said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) dies while wearing these two.” Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.²⁹

Al-Ḥasan said: “Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhū*) gave a *ḵutbah* while he was the Khalīfah. He was wearing an *iẓār* which had twelve holes in it.’

3. Accommodation (*maskan*), in this matter the ascetic is of one of three levels:

- i. The loftiest level, which is that he does not seek a specific place for himself, rather he is content with the *masjid*, like the *Aṣḥab al-Ṣaffah*.³⁰
- ii. The median level, which is that he seeks a specific place for himself, like a nut in a palm leaf, and the like.
- iii. The lowest level, which is that he seeks to dwell in a purpose built place, raising its ceiling and extended it more. He has surpassed the limits of the ascetic in accommodation, for the Prophet (ﷺ) died and he had not built his house.³¹

Al-Ḥasan said: ‘Whenever I visited the homes of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) I was able to touch the ceilings.’

In another ḥadīth: “A Muslim will be rewarded for everything that he spends out except for something he spends on building.”³²

²⁸ A sheet cloth garment covering the lower half of the body

²⁹ Bukhārī, vol.6, p.149; Muslim, #2080; Abū Dāwūd, #4036; and Tirmidhī, #1733.

³⁰ The poor Muhājirīn, and those of them who had no accommodation to live in. They stayed in a part of the Masjid an-Nabawī which could shade and cover them.

³¹ Reported by Ibn Ḥibbān in *al-Thiqāt*; Abū Nu‘aym, *al-Ḥilyah*—from al-Ḥasan in mursal form; Ṭabarānī, *al-Awsaṭ*—from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*), the chain of transmission is weak; as is found in *Takbrīj ul-Ihyā’*, vol.4, p.236.

³² Bukhārī, #5672; Muslim, #940; al-Ḥumaydī, #154; Tirmidhī, #2600; Ibn Mājah, #4163; Ahmad, vol.5, p.109; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #3675; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.1, p.146; al-Qadā’ī, #1046—via the route of Khabbāb Ibn al-Arāṭ (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*).

Ibrāhīm al-Nakhā'ī (*raḥimahullāh*) said: 'If a building is modest, there is neither a reward nor a punishment for that.'

So in conclusion, there should not be any exaggeration, ostentation or transgressing the bounds in all that is needed due to dire necessity.

4. House furniture (*athbātha*), the ascetic should suffice with a pot, and just use one utensil for his needs. He eats and drinks from one and the same dish. Whoever has many utensils has left the realm of *ṣubḥ*.

One should look at the biography of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ). In Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from the ḥadīth of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhū*) who said: 'I visited Allāh's Messenger while he was lying on a mat which left marks on his side. I looked in his wardrobe and I found only a handful of barley equal to a *ṣa'ah*.' The ḥadīth is famous and found in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.³³

'Alī (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhū*) said: 'I married Fāṭimah and we had no bed except for a sheepskin. We used to sleep on this at night and serve fodder on it to the camel at day. I had no other servant other than her.'

A man visited Abū Dharr (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhū*) and began looking around his house. The man said to Abū Dharr: 'O Abū Dharr, I see that you neither have any provisions in your house nor furniture.' Abū Dharr (*raḍiyAllāhu 'anhū*) said: 'We have another house which we are going to which has the best provisions and furniture.' The man said: 'But you will need some provisions to take with you as long as you are here.' Abū Dharr replied: 'The owner of that house [Allāh] will soon get us to leave this house [i.e. death].'

5. Marriage (*mankah*), *ṣubḥ* has nothing to do with marriage.

³³ Muslim #1479 and also in Bukhārī, vol.8, p.503

Sahl Ibn 'Abdu'llāh³⁴ said: 'Women were beloved to Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ).'

'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) was of the most ascetic of the Companions and he had four wives and ten servant women.

Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī used to say: 'All which preoccupy from Allāh, such as family, wealth, property and children are blameworthy.'

In removing the lid from this issue we can say: whoever finds his desire overcoming him and fears for himself has to get married. As for the one who does not fear, then is marriage for such a person better or is it done out of worship? There is a difference of opinion among the scholars on this issue, and the people fluctuate on this issue. Some seek marriage so as to bring about descendants and so that he can gain a lawful earning for his family, and this neither damages his religion nor affects his heart. Rather, marriage removes his concern, lowers his gaze, returns his concentration and all of this is of the utmost virtue. In doing so he follows the way of the Prophet (ﷺ) and 'Alī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) and all who followed their way in regards to marriage. One should not pay any attention to those who regard *zuhd* as abandoning the delight of marriage.

Some of the Salaf used to choose to marry women who were not beautiful as these are the ones who are more focused on their religion, suffice with less and have affairs which are easier to live with. This is as opposed to marrying a beautiful woman as she will confuse his heart, preoccupy him and demand increase expenditure to be spent on her, and her husband may be unable to do that.

³⁴ Al-Tustarī, he died in 283 AH, for his biography and reports refer to *al-Ḥilyah*, vol.10, pp.190-212. The ḥadīth is mu'ḍal [more than two consecutive narrators are missing in the chain of transmission], however it is verified from Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) and relayed by Nasā'ī, vol.7, p.61 and Aḥmad, vol.3, pp.128, 199 and 285.

Mālik Ibn Dīnār said: 'Each of you should beware of marrying a living brocade who will say to you 'I want some woollen cloth with which to use' and you go along with her.'

6. Wealth (*māl*), it is a necessity of life, the ascetic suffices with that which time can allow for and some of the righteous people worked as traders and the intent of their work was to be content.

Ḥammād Ibn Salamah used to open his shop and then leave after making two *dirhams* per day.

Sa'īd Ibn al-Musayyib was an oil trader and left behind four hundred *dinārs* and said: 'I have only left this behind in order to protect my honour and religion.'

7. Status (*jāh*), a person has to have some degree of status even in the heart of his employee. The ascetic being preoccupied with *zuhd* can lead to status resting in his heart and due to this he should be cautioned against its evil.

In conclusion, dire necessities and needs are not to be regarded as the world [worldly delights] and when lawful earnings were presented to the Salaf they used to say: 'We do not take it as we fear that it will corrupt our religion.'

Section Ten:

The Characteristics of Asceticism

You may think that the one who abandons wealth is the one who is regarded as an 'ascetic' (*zāhid*), yet it is not so. Abandoning wealth and manifesting coarseness is easy for those who love to be praised for *zuhd*. How many monks have stayed in monasteries and eaten little yet love to be praised for that, as we mentioned earlier in 'the

chapter on *riyā'* (showing off).'

There has to be *zuhd* in regards to both wealth and reputation so that the *zuhd* can be perfected within the soul.

Ibn ul-Mubārak said: 'The best of *zuhd* is to hide it' and three signs have to be present:

One: that he is neither happy with what is present (*mujūd*) nor does he grieve over what is absent (*mafqūd*) as Allāh said:

لَا تَكِنَّا
تَأْسُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ

“In order that you not despair over what has eluded you and not exult [in pride] over what He has given you.”

[*al-Ḥadīd* (57): 23]

This is the sign of *zuhd* in wealth.

Two: that in his view, his detractor (*dhām*) and his admirer (*mādh*) are the same, this is the sign of *zuhd* in regards to reputation and status (*jāh*).

Three: that his intimacy (*uns*) is only to Allāh, and that the sweetness (*ḥalāwa*) of obedience (*tā'at*) to Allāh dominates his heart (*qalb*).

As for the one who loves the world and loves Allāh then in most cases it is like trying to combine air and water in a vessel, when the water enters the air cannot stay in as they cannot be combined together.

One of them [the righteous people] said to another: 'Where has *zuhd* led you?' He replied: 'To close [familiarity or] friendship with Allāh.'

Yahyā Ibn Mu'ādh said: 'The world is like a bride, the one who seeks

her becomes her beautician and the ascetic is like the who darkens her face,³⁵ cuts its hair and damages her wedding dress. The [true] gnostic is occupied (*mushtagil*) with Allāh.

This is what we wanted to mention about the reality of *zuhd* and its regulations. Yet as *zuhd* cannot be completed except with *tawakkul* [reliance on Allāh], we will explain it next *inshā' Allāh*.

³⁵ [TN]: Some of these expressions are quite problematic, as what is to be said of those who are already dark-skinned!? Beauty is not to be discussed in this way, and is of the questionable aspects which we come across in some of the books of the scholars in the past which may be based on what was cultural the norm in the societies from which they came. Hence, in the majority of the Arab world, black and brown skinned people are regarded as ugly and thus not fit for marriage (!!?) merely on account of the skin colour which Allāh has created for some of the children of Ādam, and this is nothing but pure racism and contains a degree of mockery of Allāh's creation. And hence, in some North African, Arab and Asian countries, weddings are characterised by exaggerated usage of white face make up which renders the bride looking far from attractive than her original colour in the first place! Furthermore, some people may happen to love dark-skinned brown complexions as scholars such as Ibn al-Jawzī, Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Suyūṭī have mentioned in their writings.

THE FIFTH FOUNDATION

On Faith in Divine Unity and Reliance
(*tawḥīd wa'l-tawakkul*)

Section One:
Exposition on the Merits of Reliance

Allāh said:

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

“let the believers put their trust in Allāh.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 122]

And He said:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ﴿٦٣﴾

“Allāh will be enough for those who put their trust in Him.”

[*al-Ṭalāq* (65): 3]

In the ḥadīth where the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that seventy thousand people from his *ummah* will enter Paradise without account, and he said: “They are the ones who do not use cauterisation, they do not

ask for *ruqyah*, they do not believe in omens and they have reliance on and trust in their Lord.” Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.¹

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: I heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say: “If you were to rely on your Lord and trust in Him as He deserves, He would provide for you as He provides for a bird which goes out in the early morning hungry and returns to its nest full.”²

Of the supplications of the Prophet (ﷺ) were: “O Allāh I ask You for success to perform actions which You Love, sincere trust in You and good suspicion of You.”³

Tawakkul is based on *tawḥīd* and *tawḥīd* demands three levels:

The first level is that the heart believes in Allāh’s Divine Unity (*waḥdāniyya*) and that this is translated in your words:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ
وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“lā ilaha ilā Allāh, waḥdahu la sharīk lahu, lahu’l-mulk wa lahu’l-ḥamd wa huwa ‘alā kulli shay’in qadīr”

“None has the right to be worshipped except Allāh alone, having no partners. Sovereignty is His, and all praise for Him, and He has full power over everything.”⁴

¹ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.179; Muslim, #220 from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*).

² Aḥmad, #205; Tirmidhī, #2447; Ibn ul-Mubārak, *al-Zuhd*, p.559; Ibn Mājah, #719; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.10, p.69; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.318; al-Qadā’ī, #1444; Ibn Mājah, #4164—from two routes of transmission with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

³ Relayed by al-Suyūṭī in *al-Jāmi‘ al-Sagḥir*, #1287 and it is weak; Abū Nu‘aym in *al-Ḥilyah* ascribes it to al-ʿAwzā’ī in a mursal form; al-Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī reports it from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*); al-Munāwī mentioned it in *al-Fayd*, vol.2, p.141 and in Ḥākim’s chain is ‘Umar Ibn ‘Amr and there have been some words in regards to him and our Shaykh [Imām al-Albānī] deemed him as a weak narrator.

⁴ Bukhārī 4/95 and Muslim 4/2090

Most of the common people believe in this yet without any understanding of the proofs for it.

The second level is to look at created things and to understand that they emanated from the One (*al-Wāḥid*), this is ‘the station of those brought near’ (*maqām al-muqarrabūn*).

The third level is when a person’s insight has been uncovered he sees that there is no Doer except Allāh. He has fear (*khawf*) of only Allāh, hope (*rajāʾ*) in Him, trust in Him and reliance (*tawakkul*) on Him as Allāh is the only Doer (*fāʿil*) in reality. Glory unto Him, everything is subject to Him. One should not depend on rain for the cultivation of produce, or clouds for rain to fall, or wind to aid a ship—as relying and depending (*iʿtimād*) on all of this is ignorance of the reality of things. The one who has the realities uncovered for him will know that the wind does not move on its own accord as there is a must for the One Who Moves it.

Section Two:

Exposition on the States of *tawakkul* in Allāh, its Criteria and Deeds

Know that ‘trust and reliance’ *tawakkul* is derived from *wakālah*, it is said: ‘so and so entrusted his matter with so and so, and depended (*itiqād*) on him for it.’

Tawakkul is an expression of the heart trusts (*iʿtimād al-qalb*) the one whom he trust (*muwakkil*), and a person does not trust on other than him except that it has to fulfil these factors: intercession (*shafaqa*), power (*quwa*) and guidance (*hidāya*).

If you know this then make an analogy on this for *tawakkul* on

Allāh, Glory unto Him. If it is affirmed in you that there is no Doer (*fā'il*) other than Allāh, and you believe that He has Complete Knowledge (*'ilm*), Ability (*qudra*) and Mercy (*rahma*), and that there is no ability after His Ability, and no knowledge after His Knowledge, and no mercy after His Mercy. Your Heart should rely on Him alone and not look towards other than Him. If you do not find this state in yourself then this can be due to one of two reasons:

1. Either due to weak certainty (*da'f al-yaqīn*) of one of these aspects
2. Or due to weakness of the heart (*da'f al-qalb*) due to it being conquered by cowardice, and its agitation due to whims which have dominated it, for the heart can be agitated by whims and obeying them without this affecting his certainty. Similarly, one who takes honey will want to relieve himself of excrement yet his nature may not like this and thus he will excuse himself from taking it.

If an intelligent person took it upon himself to spend the night somewhere where there was a dead body, either in a grave, bed or house, his nature would detest this. Even though he is certain that the inanimate body is of a dead person at present, his nature does not detest other inanimate objects—this is cowardice of the heart, and is a type of weakness and rarely does this leave a person. It could become strengthened to the extent that it becomes a sickness and he will even fear staying at home alone with the door closed.

Thus, *tawakkul* is most complete except with a strong heart (*quwa al-qalb*) and firm certainty (*quwa al-yaqīn*). So if the meaning of *tawakkul* is discovered by you, and you know the situation where is referred to as '*tawakkul*' you will know that such a situation has, in strength and weakness, three levels:

The first: that he has trust in Allāh's Guardianship and Concern,

as he would trust a *Wakīl*.

The second: which is stronger, which is that his situation with Allāh is like a child with its mother who knows none other than her. The first thought in his heart, and the first word on his tongue, is “*O my mother!*” Whoever goes to Allāh, looks at Him, depends on Him, loves Him as a child loves its mother, will truly be a *mutawakkil*.

The difference between this and the first level is that the *mutawakkil* can become annihilated in his *tawakkul* from *tawakkul* in that he does not turn to other than Whom he trusts and his heart is not concerned with anything else.

The third: which is higher than the two preceding levels, and he stands before Allāh as if he were a dead body before the one washing it. He does not separate from Allāh except that he feels as if he is dead like a child who is separated from its mother.

Section Three:

Explanation of the Actions of the Those Reliant on Allāh

Some people think that the meaning of *tawakkul* is to abandon earning a profit, and the heart’s reflection as if he is like meat on a chopping board—but this is only what ignorant people suppose. For that is prohibited (*ḥarām*) by Divine Legislation.

The Divine Legislation could praise ‘reliant’ (*mutawakkilīn*), yet the impact of *tawakkul* is only manifest in a servant’s movements and striving for the objective. The servant’s efforts are either to gain an absent benefit—such as an earning; or to preserve something which is already present—such as with storing and saving; or to avert a harm which has not yet arisen—such as averting an attack; or to remove

a harm which has already arisen—such as the sick seeking medical treatment. Thus, the actions of the servant are not free of four:

The first kind: gaining benefits, the factors with which benefits are gained, and these are on three levels:

The first level: Decisive factors such as those linked to Allāh's Decree (*taqdīr*) and Will (*mashī'ah*) which result in certain ends. This is like: food being placed in front of you when you are hungry. You do not put your hands out and say 'I trust in Allāh' (*mutawakkil*), this is pure madness and is not from *tawakkul* at all. For if you were to think that Allāh will create in you an appetite without food or He create food to move by its own into your mouth, or if He were to subject an angel to bring food to you, if you think this is the case then you have been ignorant of the Sunnah of Allāh.

Similarly, if you do not cultivate and you sufficed with thinking that Allāh will create for you plants without seeds or that your wife will give birth without intercourse—all of that would be madness. *Tawakkul* is not abandoning action, rather *tawakkul* contains both knowledge (*'ilm*) and state (*ḥāl*).

As for knowledge (*'ilm*): then it is that you know that Allāh created food and your hands as a means of subsistence and to give strength of movement, and that Allāh is the One who feeds and provides drink for you.

As for state (*ḥāl*): then it is that your heart and dependence (*i'timād*) is on Allāh and not on the hand and food. This is as his hand could become hurt or Allāh could subjugate on you one who overcomes you for food. Thus, using ones hand [practical action to feed yourself] does not contradict *tawakkul*.

The second level: Causes which are not certain, like one who departs

from a land and travels to the rural areas which people only travel to rarely but does not take any provisions with him, he resembles one who is trying to test out Allāh and this is prohibited. It is rather instructed and advised for him to carry provisions with him as Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) would travel and take provisions with him along with a guide when he migrated to Madīnah.⁵

The third level: Undertaking causes which he is clearly deluded into thinking lead to their ends. This is like the one who deliberates on even the minutest of details on how to earn a living. Whenever his intent is accurate and what he does not fall outside the remit of the Divine Legislation or outside of *tawakkul*. However, he may fall into being from the people who become obsessed (*ahl al-hīrs*) in seeking livelihood.

Abandoning earning a living is not from *tawakkul* at all, rather it is an action of the unemployed who sit without work and suffice with *tawakkul*.

‘Umar (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘The one who relies on Allāh, he is the one who plants a seed in the earth and then trusts on Allāh.’

The second kind: factors and means which enhance existing subsistence such as saving and storing. Whoever finds lawful sustenance the earning of which preoccupies him, his storing or saving of such sustenance does not expel him from the remit of *tawakkul*, especially if he has a family.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶ from the ḥadīth of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to sell date palms from Banu Nadir and store a year's worth of sustenance.

⁵ Bukhārī, vol.7, p.180; and al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr mentioned in *al-Fatḥ* that al-Ḥākim reported it, as did az-Zubayr Ibn Bakkar in *Akbbār ul-Madīnah* and Ibn ‘Ā'id.

⁶ Bukhārī, vol.9, p.501; and Muslim, #1757, 50.

So if it is said: “Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) forbade Bilāl from storing”,⁷ then the answer to this is that: the poor people were his guests and if he had stored food they would have gone hungry. Another answer is that Bilāl (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) himself was from the *Ahl ul-Ṣuffah* which obligated that he did not store anything.

The third kind: embarking on means which avert harm. It is not a condition of *tawakkul* to abandon the means of subsistence which have to be taken to avert harm. It is not allowed to sleep in a land where carnivorous animals frequent, or by a sea or under a derelict wall—all of that is prohibited.

Likewise, *tawakkul* does not contradict protecting oneself with armour or shields, locking the door or tying ones camel with an *‘iqāl*. Allāh said:

وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتِهِمْ

“...but take precaution.”

[*al-Nisā’* (4): 102]

A man went to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and said: “O Messenger of Allāh, should I tie it and trust in Allāh, or untie and trust in Allāh.” The Prophet (ﷺ) replied: “Tie it and trust in Allāh.”⁸

⁷ Reported by al-Bazzār, vol.1, p.302; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #1020, 10300; al-Qaḍā’ī, #749—from Ibn Mas’ūd and there is weakness in the chain however it has supporting narrations in al-‘Askarī, *Faṭḥ ul-Wabbāb*, vol.2, p.20; also reported by Abū Ya’lā, p.276, #2; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #1025; Ṭabarānī, *al-Awsaṭ*; al-Bazzār from Abū Hurayrah. Al-Ḥaythamī in *al-Majma’*, vol.10, p.241 said: “the isnād is ḥasan”.

Ṭabarānī has two other routes of transmission for it (#1021 and 1022) from Bilāl, yet within the isnād is weakness. Thus, the ḥadīth is, insha’Allāh, ḥasan. Refer to the verification of the report by the brother, Shaykh Ḥamdī ‘Abdu’l-Majīd al-Salafī in *Musnad al-Shihāb*, vol.1, pp.437-438, which has a beneficial addition. Our Shaykh, al-Albānī, authenticated the ḥadeeth in *al-Mishkāt*, #1885.

⁸ Reported by Tirmidhī, #2519; Abū Nu’aym, vol.8, p.390; al-Bayhaqī, *Shu’ab ul-Īmān*; Ibn Abi Dunyā, *al-Tawakkul*, p.12—from Anas and within the isnād is weakness; reported by Ibn Ḥibbān, #720; Ḥākim, vol.3, p.623; al-Qaḍā’ī, #633—from ‘Amr ibn Umayyah. Al-‘Irāqī deemed the isnād to be good in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.279—with the two routes is ṣaḥīḥ. Refer to *al-Majma’*, vol.10, p.291; *al-Maqaṣid al-Ḥasnaḥ*, #128; *Fayḍ ul-Qadīr*, vol.4, p.531.

In all of that he relies on the Causer and not on the causes and he is pleased with all that Allāh decrees for him. Whenever his provisions are stolen and he starts thinking “if only I tied them up or locked it would not have stolen” or he begins to complain about what happens to him—his distance from *tawakkul* becomes apparent.

A person complained to some scholars that he was robbed on the highway and his wealth was taken. One of the scholars said to the person: ‘If you are not concerned with how the state of the Muslims is for this to happen to you more than the loss of your wealth then you have not truly shown any sincere concern for the Muslims.’

The fourth kind: Striving to remove a harm, such as a sick person getting medical treatment etc. Know that the reasons which remove harm are split into three parts:

1. That which has to happen, such as water removing the harm of thirst; bread removing the harm of hunger—leaving these things has nothing to do with *tawakkul* whatsoever.

2. That which is presumptive such as venesection (*faṣḍ*),⁹ cupping therapy (*ḥijāmah*) and drinking a laxative (*musahil*). None of this contradicts *tawakkul*, for the Prophet (ﷺ) used to seek treatment and instructed others to also seek treatment.¹⁰

Many Muslims seek treatments yet some refrained from seeking treatments based on *tawakkul* as has been reported from Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that it was said to him: ‘Should we not

⁹ Puncturing of veins [venesection].

¹⁰ The instruction to seek treatment is relayed in Bukhārī, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, p.291; Abū Dāwūd, #3855; Tirmidhī, vol.2, p.3; Ibn Mājah, #3436; Ibn Ḥibbān, #1395; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.198, 399; Ṭayālīsī, #1232; al-Ḥumaydī, #824; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.278—from Usāmah Ibn Sharīk with an isnād which is ṣaḥīḥ. As for Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) seeking treatment refer to *Zād ul-Ma‘ād*, vol.4, pp.10-22.

call a physician for you?’ Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) replied: ‘I have seen a doctor already.’ It was said: ‘What did he say to you?’ Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Indeed, I do as I will.’

The author (*rahimahullāh*) said: what we support is that seeking treatment is better, as for in the case of Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) then he used to seek treatments and then stopped after he benefitted from the treatments, or he knew that his appointed time [death] was approaching due to certain signs.

Know that treatments are means which Allāh has subjugated by His Permission.

3. That the means are, such as cauterization (*kay*) as this is outside of *tawakkul* as the Prophet (ﷺ) described those who have trust in Allāh as not getting treated with cauterization.¹¹

Some of the scholars considered the cauterization mentioned as that type which was conducted during the pre-Islamic era as they used to use cauterization and *ruqyahs* so that they would not become ill, and the Prophet (ﷺ) used to perform *ruqyah* on Ruqayyah whenever she would be sick. While As‘ad Ibn Zarārah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) got cauterized.¹²

As for the sick person complaining then this is unrelated to *tawakkul* and they used to dislike the murmurs of the sick as it is a type of complaining.

Al-Fuḍayl used to say: ‘I yearn for an illness, but not visitors.’

¹¹ The verification of this ḥadīth was mentioned prior.

¹² Reported by Ibn Mājah, no.3492; Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Barr, *al-Istī‘āb*, vol.5, p.469; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.65, vol.5, p.378; Ibn Sa’d, vol.3, p.2, no.140—via two routes from some of the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

While a man said to Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal: ‘How are you?’ Imām Aḥmad replied: ‘In good health.’ Then the man said: ‘You had a fever yesterday?’ Imām Aḥmad replied: ‘As long as I am in good health that is enough for you to know, do not lead me to what I dislike [i.e. complaining].’

If a sick person describes to a doctor what is wrong with him, this is not a problem as some of the Salaf did that, saying “I am just describing Allāh’s Power on me” and outline it to a student to strengthen him during times of difficulty and to view it as a favour. He describes the illness as he would a favour and be grateful [to Allāh] for it—this is not complaining.

We relayed that that Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I feel pain as much as two men from among you would.”¹³

¹³ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.96; and Muslim, #2571—from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

THE SIXTH FOUNDATION

On Love, Longing, Intimacy and Contentment

(al-maḥabba wa'l-shawq wa'l-uns wa'l-riḍā)

Know that the love of Allāh the Most High is the main objective of the stations (*maqāmāt*) and the station after comprehending love (*maḥabba*) is but of its fruits and hallmarks, such as longing (*shawq*), intimacy (*uns*), contentment (*riḍā*), and the like; nor is there prior to love any station that is not introductory to such, such as repentance (*tawba*), patience (*sabr*), and asceticism (*zuhd*), and the like.

Know that the *ummah* holds a consensus that the love of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) is an obligation (*fard*). That which testifies to love is where Allāh the Most High said:

يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ

“[Allāh will bring forth in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 54]

And He said:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

“But those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh.”

[*al-Baqarab* (2): 165]

This is a proof to affirm Allāh’s Love, and how some can fluctuate in their love. In the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth¹ where a man asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the Hour and the Prophet (ﷺ) asked the man: “What have you prepared for it?” The man said: “O Messenger of Allāh, I have not prepared for it with much prayer or fasting, except that I love Allāh and His Messenger.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A man is with whom he loves and you are with whom you love.” So what joy is there for the Muslims, after the joy of Islām, after this?

It is also reported that Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhis-salām*) said to the Angel of Death when he came to seize his soul, ‘Have you ever seen a friend who kills his friend?’ But then Allāh inspired him, ‘Have you ever seen a lover who hates to meet his beloved?’ At that Ibrāhīm said, ‘O Angel of death, seize me at once!’

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (*raḥimahullāh*) said: ‘Whoever knows his Lord loves Him. Whoever loves anyone other than Allāh, without regard for his relationship with Allāh, does so out of ignorance and flawed knowledge of Allāh.’

As for love of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) then this can only occur out of love of Allāh. And likewise with love of the scholars and the pious because that which is loved (*maḥbūb*) by the beloved (*maḥbūb*) is itself worthy of love (*maḥbūb*). Thus whatever the beloved (*maḥbūb*) does is also beloved (*maḥbūb*), and the Messenger of the Beloved (*maḥbūb*) is [himself] beloved (*maḥbūb*). All this goes back to love of the original object of love and nothing else. For those who possess

¹ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.461; and Muslim, #2639

insight there is in reality no object of love (*maḥbūb*) but Allāh, nor does anyone but He deserve love.

This is due to the following causes:

The First Cause: Man's love for himself and the perfection and continuance of his own existence coupled with his hatred for death and non-existence and deficiency. This is natural to all living things and it is unimaginable that this is absent among them. This necessitates the objective of loving Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, as when a person knows his Lord he will know decisively that his existence, presence and perfection is from Allāh and that Allāh is his inventor, and the One Who Brought him into existence after he was purely non-existent if not for Allāh's favour in creating him. Man is flawed after coming into existence if not for Allāh's favour on him by perfecting his inner nature. For this reason al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said, 'Whoever knows his Lord loves Him while whoever knows the world renounces it.' How can a man love himself and not love his Lord through whom his very continuation occurs?

The Second Cause: Man's love for those who are good to him by helping him, and is forbearing to him, and offering him assistance and to suppress his enemies, and aiding him in all his affairs. Such a benefactor (*muḥsin*) is certainly loved. Whoever is truly aware knows that Allāh and Allāh alone is the only benefactor (*muḥsin*). To enumerate the various benefits (*iḥsān*) He shows to him; no record could encompass them. It is as He said:

وَأِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا

"And if you should count the favors of Allāh, you could not enumerate them."

[Ibrāhīm (14): 34]

We have already explained this point under the chapter of Thank-

fulness. Now we confine ourselves to explaining that human goodness is conceivable only in a figurative sense; the true benefactor is Allāh alone.

In explaining this, let us say for example that a person was favoured with all the treasures that he could own and then made you responsible for these treasures to do whatever you wish with them. You would regard this as showing good to you—yet this would be wrong, as this favour is only in so far as it relates to his wealth and property and his ownership over it and his desire to spend it. Yet Who has favoured this man by creating him, and creating his wealth, his will and desire? Who made you loveable in his eyes and inclined his face towards you and prompted in his soul the notion that his own well-being in this world and the next lay in doing good to you? Who made you beloved in his eyes? Who inclined his face towards you? Who has placed in his soul the notion that his own well-being in this world and the next lay in doing good to you? And if not for this he would not give to you, to the extent that it is as if he is compelled to hand over his wealth with no choice in the matter?

Nevertheless, the real benefactor is He who has subjected this man on your behalf, rendering him like a shopkeeper who has been instructed by a king to give gifts. The shop keeper does not view that it is good to give those items from his shop as gifts as the king requests, he is just doing it out of compulsion and if the king was not in power he himself would not give anything to you.

Similarly, benefactor, if not for Allāh they would not spend out their wealth, it is only Allāh compelling them to do so and placing in their souls the desire to spend out. Therefore, the gnostic (*‘ārif*) should not love anyone except Allāh as goodness from other than Him is impossible.

The Third Cause: The Benefactor even if his goodness does not

reach you is still beloved (*maḥbūb*) naturally. If it reached your attention that there was a king who was a scholar, worshipper, a friend to the people, forbearing with them and present in a distant land—you would love to meet him, and in your heart you would incline greatly to him. This is love of a doer of good, not to mention him being a doer of good to you. This is what the love of Allāh necessitates, that you do not love other than Him, except as far as it relates to the reason. Allāh is benefactor to all, by creating them, perfecting them with bodily organs and other factors which are a necessity for them, not to mention the other favours which are countless, it is as He says,

وَأِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا

“And if you should count the favors of Allāh, you could not enumerate them.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 17]

He is the Benefactor, how could anyone else be a benefactor, since that benefactor is himself merely one good thing among all the good things within His power? Whoever knows this, loves no one but Allāh.

Similarly we say: All who are described with knowledge, or ability, or devoid of vile characteristics, necessitates loving the person. The descriptions of the truthful ones (*siddiqīn*) whom you love possess hearts which are filled with their knowledge of Allāh, His angels, His scriptures, His Messengers, together with the revealed truth of His Prophets. They also possess the capacity to rectify their own souls and absolve them from that which is vile and filth. Due to such attributes you love the Prophets (*‘alayhimus-salām*) and if you were to ascribe these attributes to Allāh’s Attributes they would pale into insignificance. With regard to knowledge, then, where is the knowledge of the first and the last with respect to Allāh’s knowledge which encompasses everything in a manner so surpassing of all limits that not even the measure of a speck of dust in the heavens and on the earth eludes it? Allāh has addressed all His creatures when He says:

وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾

“Little indeed is the knowledge vouchsafed to you.”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 85]

If the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth gathered to encompass His Knowledge and Wisdom, even the minute creation of an ant or mosquito, they would be unable to encompass a tenth of a tenth of that. They can grasp only that part of His Knowledge which He Wills and this is a tiny fraction which He has taught His creation. But the disparity between Allāh's Knowledge over the knowledge of the creation is endless and infinite.

As for Allāh's Attribute of Ability then it is also an Attribute of perfection, and if the ability of the creation is compared to the Ability of Allāh you will find that the strongest person among human beings, who possesses the most, is the most powerful and the most competent politically—then his ability is only to the extent that it affects himself and he is still unable to avert harm from himself or bring benefit, and he does not possess death, or life or resurrection. He is unable to protect his eyesight from blindness, his tongue from dumbness, his ears from deafness, his body from illness. He is unable to control an atom from creation and he is unable to have ability over his own self or over others as his ability is not from his own self rather Allāh Created it, its means and empowered him from that. If Allāh was to subject a mosquito to kill the greatest king and the most powerful person alive then the servant [of Allāh] would not have the ability to avert that. Allāh mentioned in regards to the greatest king on earth, Dhu'l-Qarnayn:

إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ

“We have given him dominion on earth.”

[*al-Kahf* (18): 85]

His entire kingdom and dominion was only due to Allāh's Em-

powerment of him. Thus, the forelocks of all of the creation are in Allāh's Grasp and Ability. If He destroyed them it would not detract an atom's weight from His Dominion even if He Created their likes a thousand times over, creating them is easy for Him, there is no one Ever-Able except Him. He has all Perfection, Greatness, Authority, Dominance and Control. If you were to imagine that you love one who is Ever-Able due to His Perfect Ability, and Magnitude and Knowledge, and such love is not worthy of being directed to anyone else. Perfect Sanctity and Exaltation is only for Allāh, and unimaginable for anyone else.

He is One with no partner. He is Eternal with no challenger, Self-Sufficient with no need, Ever-Able doing as He Wills, Rules as He Wants, none can avert or dispute His Judgement. He is the All-Knowing and not even that which is the weight of an atom escape Him on earth or in the heavens.

The perfect knowledge of the gnostics (*'ārifīn*) is that they admit that they are unable to fully comprehend Him, He deserves perfect love from the outset.

Section One:

An Exposition that the Noblest and Loftiest Pleasure is Knowledge of Allāh

Know that pleasures follow comprehensions, and a human combines both power (*quwā*) and instincts (*gharā'iz*), and each power has an instinct of pleasure and these instincts were not created without a purpose. Rather, they have an intent which follows it naturally, so instinct is the desire of food which has been created in order to obtain nourishment for good health. The pleasure of the seeing and hearing is viewing and listening. Likewise, the heart has an instinct which may be called 'divine light' (*al-nūr al-ilāhī*) and it could also be

called 'the intellect' (*ʿaql*), or 'inner vision' (*al-baṣīra al-bāṭina*), or 'the light of faith and certainty' (*nūr al-imān wa'l-yaqīn*). These instincts have been created to understand the reality of things by their nature. The nature necessitates knowledge (*ilm*) and understanding (*ma'rifa*) and that is its pleasure.

It is not hidden that the one who is ascribed to knowledge and understanding, even in lowly things, is joyous. While the one who ascribes to ignorance, even in lowly things, is worried with it. That is due to neglecting the pleasure of knowledge and whatever instils the perfection of its pleasure. Knowledge of the best characteristics to possess and as a result a person feels at ease when he is praised for his intelligence and abundant knowledge. However, the pleasure with the knowledge of agriculture and dressmaking is not like the pleasure of the knowledge of politics and social organisation. The pleasure with the knowledge of poetry and grammar is not like the pleasure of knowledge of Allāh, His angels, and the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. Rather, the pleasure of knowledge depends on the nobility of that knowledge and the nobility of knowledge depends on the nobility of what is being known. This is so, it becomes clear that the most pleasurable of knowledge is the most noble and the most noble based on the nobility of what is being known about Who is more glorious, more perfect, more noble and more great, and thus knowledge of Him is the most pleasurable without doubt.

If only I knew if there was anything in existence more majestic, more high, more sublime, more perfect, more great than that of the Creator of all things, Originator, Adorner, Beginner, Preparer, Planner and Arranger of all things? Is it even imaginable to be in the presence of one more majestic, perfect, beautiful, magnificent, and greater than the Divine Presence (*ḥaḍrat al-rabānnīyya*) which cannot be encompassed?

It is a must for you to know that the pleasure of knowledge and

understanding is more powerful than all pleasures which can be comprehended by the five senses. The internal semantics are more common with those who possess perfection than apparent pleasures. If a man was to choose between the pleasure of eating a large chicken and *al-lowẓīn*², and between the pleasure of leadership and dominance over his enemies to the level of conquering them—then if the person choosing was of lowly concerns with a dead heart that was only interested in base animal instincts he would choose the meat and sweets! Yet if he had high aspirations and complete intelligence, he would choose leadership and easily withstand hunger, being patient with daily subsistence.

His choice of leadership would also indicate that it is more pleasurable to him than good food, just as the pleasure of leadership is more pleasurable to those who has surpassed feelings of deficiency felt by those with low aspirations. Yet the pleasure of knowledge of Allāh and looking at the secrets of divine matters is more pleasurable than leadership which is the highest pleasure of most of the creation. This is only known by those who have tasted both pleasures together and are only concerned with seclusion, reflection and remembrance, fully immersed in the ocean of knowledge and abandoning leadership. He despises people out of his knowledge that when his leadership dispenses so do those over whom he leads. The knowledge of Allāh is venerated with him, as is finding out about His Attributes and Actions, the order of His Kingdom. Such people are free of worries (*muẓāḥamāt*) and anxieties (*mukaddirāt*), and [this station is] vast enough for all pursuers, it does not [just] constricted [to] them. The gnostic ceaselessly acquires such knowledge in paradise, the extent of which is that of the heavens and the earth, he will dwell in its gardens, pick from its fruits and drink from its fountains. He is safe from any cessation [since the fruits of this garden] are neither finite

² A type of sweet made from almonds similar to al-Qaṭā'if.

nor forbidden. This pleasure is everlasting, death does not sever it, **since** death does not destroy knowledge of Allāh as its resting place **is** in the soul. Death alters only its circumstances, as for death annihilating it, certainly not.

The Gnostics are of various fluctuating levels (*darajāt*) with Allāh and their fluctuating levels cannot be restricted as these matters are only through taste can this be grasped. To treat the matter of taste anecdotally would be of little use. Still, even this measure should alert you to the fact that knowledge of Allāh is the most pleasurable of all things and that there is no pleasure superior to it. For this reason, Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī said: ‘Allāh has servants to whom fear of the Fire or hope for Paradise does not distract them from Allāh; how then could the world distract them from Allāh?’³

Some of the companions of Ma‘rūf said: ‘I said to him once: what has encouraged you to worship?’ Ma‘rūf was silent for a while and then I said: ‘Remembering death?’ Ma‘rūf said: ‘What is death?’ I replied: ‘Remembering the grave?’ Ma‘rūf asked: ‘What is the grave?’ I said: ‘Fear of the Hellfire and hope for the Paradise?’ Ma‘rūf said: ‘What is all that?’ There is a King who holds everything in His Hand. If you love Him, [then He causes] you to forget all else, and if between you and Him is knowledge this will suffice you from all of that.”

Aḥmad Ibn al-Faṭḥ said: ‘I saw Bishr Ibn al-Hārith in my dream and said: ‘How did Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī do?’ He shook his head and said: ‘How far, for a veil was placed between us and him. For Ma‘rūf did not worship Allāh out of longing for Paradise nor out of fear of the Fire, but rather, he worshipped Allāh longing for Him and as a result Allāh raised him to the *Rafīq al-A‘lā* and removed the veil

³ Rather, what is correct is that worship is with love, hope and fear—this is the understanding when the texts from the Qur’ān and Sunnah are all taken into consideration as Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah transmitted in some of his books.

between Him and Ma'rūf.'

Whenever love of Allāh is obtained by a person, the person's heart will be enveloped with this love and will not be focused on Paradise and will not be in fear of the Fire as he has reached a bliss above which there is no other. Some of them said:

Separation from Him is more terrible than His Fire;
And attaining Him is sweeter than His Paradise.

What was intended with this is to express a preference for the heart's pleasure in knowing Allāh over the pleasure of food, drink and sex. Paradise is the source of the pleasure of the sense but the heart takes its pleasure in the encounter (*liqā'*) with Allāh alone.

Know that the pleasure of seeing [Allāh] in the Afterlife is more than [the pleasure] of knowing Allāh in this worldly life. It is the custom of Allāh that as long as one's soul is shrouded with bodily impediments and appetites, with all and other related deficiencies in human nature, it will not actualise 'direct witness' (*mushāhada*). On the contrary, our present life itself obstructs vision and necessarily so, just as the eyelids veil the vision (*ru'ya*) of the eyes.

The discussion on the reason for it being a veil is lengthy, suffice it so say that if the veil is removed by death, the soul remains polluted to a certain degree by the worldly life. If it enters among the ranks of the people of Paradise and then enters Paradise itself then it would have been purified from those impurities, and the truth will become clear to them based on the level of their knowledge in the world.

No one who does not know Allāh in this world will see Him in the next. No one shall harvest but what he has sown and no man will die except in accord with how he has lived. The knowledge that will accompany him will be that in which he delighted solely for its own

sake and yet, it will be transformed into actual seeing by the lifting of the veil so that his pleasure it will be redoubled. The only authentic life is in the Afterlife. Allāh said:

وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِیَ الْحَيَوَانُ

“It is the life to come that is the true, if they but knew it.”

[*al-Ankabūt* (29): 64]

The living of the Afterlife will depend on the level of knowledge [of Allāh], for this reason it is mentioned in the ḥadīth: “The best of people are those who live a long life and have [abundant] good actions.” That is because knowledge perfects, increases and widens with a long life via reflection, remembrance, forbearance with striving and cutting off from the chains of the world and disengagement (*tajarrud*) from seeking [a living]. You now know what we have mentioned about the meaning of love (*maḥabba*) and the meaning of the pleasure of knowledge, and the meaning of viewing its pleasure and the meaning of it being the most pleasurable of things according to the people of perfection.

Section Two:

Exposition of the Causes that Strengthen Love of Allāh

Know that the happiest of people and the best of them in circumstances in the Afterlife, is the strongest of them in love of Allāh. The Afterlife means going unto Allāh and comprehending the happiness of meeting Him. What is a greater favour than a lover meeting the One Whom he loves after longing for Him, able to see him without worry or anxiety. However, such bliss is dependant on the amount of love as whenever the love is more so will be the pleasure.

The source of love does not depart from a believer as he does not

depart from the source of knowledge, as for the strength of love and its dominance, then this leaves many people and is through only two things:

The first of these is the severance of worldly ties and expulsion from the heart of love for anything other than Allāh. One of the causes for weakness in loving Allāh in human hearts is the strong love for this world and his love for Allāh has been weakened. Both the world and the Afterlife are two paths, the path to cut off the world from the heart is to traverse the path of renunciation (*zuhd*), adhere to patient (*ṣabr*) and submit to both by the reins of fear (*khauf*) and hope (*rajāʾ*). In addition to the above mentioned stages such as *tawba*, *ṣabr*, *shukr*, *zuhd*, *khauf* and other besides them.

The second cause of powerful love is knowledge of Allāh which then inculcates love, and if knowledge is gained it is followed by love. This is not reached except after all worldly distractions are severed from the heart to leave nothing but pure contemplation, continuous remembrance, relentless determination and inferring the Actions of Allāh from all of that. The least of His Actions is the earth, with everything it contains, is the least of the creations in comparison to the angels and the heavenly realm.

The sun may appear small but it is in fact some one-hundred and sixty times larger than the earth, so reflect on how minute the earth is in relation to it. Then look at how small the sun is in comparison to constellation in which it rests, which is the fourth heaven.⁴ Then look at the fourth heaven and how small it is in comparison to the

⁴ Some comments of the editors are mentioned about this in the margins to the Shām Print of the work which detail that:

An authentic ascription to the Prophet (ﷺ) for this is not verified in this report, it is just a type of human *ijtihād* which is based on minute academic analogy and thus is open to being correct or incorrect.

I say: these are beneficial words, see also the footnote below.

heavens above it. Then compare the seven heavens to the *Kursi* which is like a ring thrown into a desert,⁵ as is the *Kursi* in comparison to Allāh's Throne.

Now turn your gaze towards man—created from dust which is part of the earth—and towards the other animals and how tiny they are in comparison to the earth. The smallest animal that you know is the mosquito so observe how Allāh created the mosquito in the shape of the elephant [which is one of]⁶ the biggest animals, with the addition of two wings, then observe how Allāh divided its hearing and seeing and created in its stomach organs of nutrition alongside instruments. He compound inside it particular nutritive, defensive, and digestive faculties. Observe how Allāh co-ordinated all of its circumstances, and observe how Allāh created in it the ability to fly and a trunk to absorb blood.

Consider the bees and how they take nectar from flowers and protect them from impurities, and how they obey the Queen Bee to the extent that it kills any bee who extracts nectar from the impure flowers. Consider how they choose a hexagonal shape as a dwelling place and do not choose square, circular or octagonal shapes due to specifically selecting hexagonal shapes. Despite the broadest of the shapes being the circle, bees do not go near it and if a hive was built in the shape of a circle they would remain outside of it and not enter it as circular shapes. Consider then how Allāh inspired the bee despite its small size and weakness, consider this as a slight glimpse from the animal world. Through reflection upon this and upon similar

⁵ As relayed in the report of Ibn Jareer in his *Tafsīr*, vol.3, pp.7-8, which is mursal and also contains a narrator who is matrūk. There is another narration of it yet that also contains a narrator who is Matrūk and also there is severance in the chain of transmission. There are other routes for the narration which our Shaykh [Imām al-Albānī] relayed in *Silsilah Ahādith as-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #109 yet all of them have severe weakness. Our Shaykh retracted from his authentication of it as we explained in our book *al-Radd al-'Alamī*, vol.2, p.73. .

⁶ These words in brackets are an addition from me based on reality!

instances, as knowledge increases, love increases.

As for the reasons of disparity among people in love:

Know that people all participate in the basis of love (*asl al-hubb*), however they differ due to the disparities among them in knowledge. Most people retain nothing about knowledge of Allāh except beyond His Attributes and Names which clink upon their ears. The insightful scholar however inspects the minute details of Allāh's creation until he sees what overwhelms his intellect and increases his reverence of Allāh within his heart, and his love for Him increases. The seas of this knowledge—by which I mean knowledge of the marvels of Allāh's creation—is without a shore.

As for the reasons why creation becomes incapable of understanding the knowledge of Allāh:

Then know that all who manufacture something what is manufactured indicates its manufacturer and his knowledge, life and ability is a clear apparent indication. This is even if these attributes are not comprehended by any of the five senses.

Allāh's Existence, Ability, Knowledge, and all of His Attributes, is testified to by necessity by all that we see such as: stones, trees, plants, animals, the earth, the heavens, planets, lands and seas. In fact, the first witness for us is our own self and our bodies and changing states and hearts, and all stages of our movements.

All things in the world are articulate witnesses and signs testifying to the existence of their Creator, Arranger, Enabler, and Mover. They also indicate His Knowledge, Ability, Life, Forbearance, Wisdom, Power and Majesty. As each atom states in reality that: "I am not in existence of my own volition" and that it needs that which brought

it into existence. However, our minds, in relation to comprehending the Divine Presence (*ḥaḍrat al-ilāhiyya*), are like bats in relation to the day, due to its weak vision they can only see at night yet not a day, not due to a lack of vision but due to the intense brightness of the day and the weakness of the bat's eyesight. Likewise our own minds are weak at comprehending the beauty of Allāh's presence. Glory be to Allāh who is veiled in the radiance of His own light and concealed from visions. This is the reason for the failure in understanding the knowledge of Allāh. What is also connected to this is the comprehension of viewing Allāh is comprehended by a person when they are in infancy before obtaining common sense. Then the instinct of the intellect emerges bit by bit and he is preoccupied with it and how it perceives.

Similarly, if he suddenly sees a strange animal, plant or phenomenal action of Allāh that disrupts habit wondrously, his tongue proclaims its acknowledgement quite naturally and says, "*Glory be to Allāh! Glory be to Allāh!*" He sees his length of his own life, his bodily organs and animals all of which are decisive proof-signs [to Allāh's Magnitude]. Yet he does not adequately testify due to his lengthy familiarity with them.

If a blind person reaches the age of maturity and then the covers from his eyes are removed, so that his sight extends to the heavens and the earth, and to trees, plants and animals—unexpectedly and at a single stroke. We may even fear that he may be bedazzled at the sheer bewilderment of the wonders which he has seen and how they testify to their Creator. This example and others, along with his indulgence (*inhimāk*) in vain appetites, is what blocks the creation from being illuminated with the light of knowledge (*nūr al-ma'rifa*) and swimming in its vast oceans.

And Allāh is all-Knowing and all-Wise.

Section Three:

Exposition of what 'Longing for Allāh' means

We have said earlier in affirmation of love (*maḥabba*) along with the evidences for it, and it was noted that longing (*shawq*) is one of the fruits of love, as whoever loves a thing longs for it.

Know that it is inconceivable except for something which is comprehended from one side yet not from the other. As for that which is not comprehended from the outset then it is not yearned for. Complete clarity comes about direct vision (*ru'ya*) but this happens only in the Afterlife.

Know that that divine matters are infinite and a servant only uncovers some of them while the rest remain boundless. The Gnostics knows of them and their attribution to Allāh and that whatever is absent from his knowledge is more than what is present. The servant does not cease yearning until he obtains the basis for knowledge. The first yearning comes to fulfilment in the next world, in the sense that is termed 'vision' (*ru'ya*) and 'witnessing with the eyes' (*mushāhada*). It is inconceivable for the heart which yearns to be tranquil in this world.

Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham was one who yearned. He related, 'One day I said, 'O Lord, if You have given any of Your lovers that which brings comfort to their hearts before meeting You, then give it to me, for I am extremely worried.' Then while Ibrāhīm was asleep he had a vision of Allāh saying to him: "O Ibrāhīm! Are you not ashamed to ask Me to give you what will bring comfort to your heart before you meet Me? Yet does the heart of one who yearns seek comfort before meeting its beloved?" I replied, 'O Lord, I have become overcome by love of You and I do not know what I am saying.'

Such a yearning is calmed only in the Afterlife, other than that are the sole preserve of Allāh's knowledge and is boundless, neither clear nor encompassed by the servant. The servant is preoccupied with the pleasures which are apparent to him and such favours and pleasures increase until they preoccupy from the sense of yearning to what is after that. This sum is of the lights of insight and uncovers the realities of yearning and its meanings.

From the supporting evidences in the reports is that which has been reported from Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) that he taught a man a *du'ā'* and ordered him to teach his family to utter it every day:

«أَسْأَلُكَ اللَّهُمَّ الرِّضَىٰ بَعْدَ الْقَضَاءِ، وَبَرْدَ الْعَيْشِ
بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَلَذَّةَ النَّظَرِ إِلَىٰ وَجْهِكَ، وَشَوْقًا إِلَىٰ لِقَائِكَ»

“O Allāh, I ask You for pleasure with Your Decree, prosperity after death, the contentment of looking at Your Face, and the yearning to meet You.”⁷

In the Torah, Allāh is reported to have said: ‘The righteous have yearned for Me for a long time and I also yearn to meet them.’

It is reported in some of what Allāh inspired to some of His worshippers that He said: ‘I have worshippers who love Me and I love them, I yearn for them and they yearn for Me, they remember Me and I remember them. If you traverse their path I will love you, if you avert from their path I will despise you.’ I said: ‘O Lord, what are their signs?’ Allāh said: ‘They work all day, like a shepherd who watches his sheep. They long for the sun to set, as a bird longs for its nest. When night falls, darkness emerges, beds made and each beloved is with his beloved, their feet get sore [from standing in prayer], their faces coarse [from prostrating], they recite My Words,

⁷ Nasā'ī, vol.3, p.54; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.264; Abū Ya'lā, #1624; Ibn Ḥibbān, #1967—from 'Ammār via two routes of transmission, one of which is a good chain of transmission.

flattering Me for my favours. So calling out and weeping and moaning and lamenting, between standing and sitting, between bowing down and prostration, what they endure for My sake, with what complaint I hear they make about My love.'

Section Four:

An Exposition of the Meaning of Allāh's Love for Man

Know that proofs from the Qur'ān attest to the fact that Allāh loves man. Allāh said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُطَهِّرِينَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

"Indeed, Allāh loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves."

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 222]

He also said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ

"Indeed, Allāh loves those who fight in His cause."

[*al-Saff* (61): 4]

Allāh brings attention to the fact that He does not punish those whom He loves, as Allāh responds to the one who claims to love Him by saying:

فَلَوْلِمَ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ

"Say, 'Then why does He punish you for your sins?'"

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 18]

A condition of this love necessitates sins being forgiven, Allāh said:

قُلْ

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

“Say, ‘If you should love Allāh, then follow me, [so] that Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins.’”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 31]

In the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth⁸ from the narration of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) that he said: “That Allāh said: “My servant does not cease gaining closeness to Me by the voluntary actions until I Love him.” To the end of the ḥadīth, which is a famous ḥadīth.

Of the signs of Allāh loves for His servant is, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When Allāh Loves a servant, He tests him.”⁹

Of the strongest signs is good deliberation, Allāh cultivates from childhood the best of systems, He inscribes *īmān* in his heart, illuminates his intellect, he follows all which makes him closer and stays away from all that which distances him. Then Allāh confers him with ease in his affairs without having to humiliate himself to the creation, and sets straight his back and his inner, making his concern one. If love increases it preoccupies him from everything else.

⁸ Reported by Bukhārī, vol.11, p.292

⁹ The like has been reported by Tirmidhī, #2398; Ibn Mājah, #4031; al-Qaḍā’ī, #1121—from Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with an isnād which is ḥasan, refer to *Da‘if al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḡhīr*, #294.

Section Five:

The Distinguishing Marks of Man's Love for Allāh

Know that love is claimed by everyone, how easy it is to make claims and yet how honoured is the meaning [of love]! It is inappropriate therefore for a person to be deceived by the devil's deception and by the carnal self however much it claims to love Allāh, especially for souls which have neither the signs nor the proofs for such love. Of the signs is: loving to meet Allāh in Paradise, for it cannot conceivably for a heart to love the beloved except that it loves to meet (*liqā'*) and witness (*mushābada*) Him. This is not contrary to disliking death as the believer dislikes death, while meeting Allāh is after death.

Some early Muslims were those who loved death and those who disliked it either due to their weak love or due to loving something from the world, or because of his sins he wanted to remain and repent.

Of them were those who view themselves as being at the beginning station of love (*maqām al-maḥabba*) and thus the haste of death was disliked to him as he wanted to prepare to meet Allāh. This is like when a lover hears of the arrival of his beloved yet he would like for his arrival to be delayed an hour or so in order to prepare for him and meet him as he would like with a heart free from preoccupations and with a light load on the back. The dislike for these reasons does not contradict complete love and its sign is: perseverance in actions and immersion in the concern for preparation.

Of this also is to be influenced by what Allāh Loves, so that his outer and inner loves the same. He stays away from following his

desires¹⁰ and shuns laziness, persevering with obedience to Allāh gaining closeness to Allāh by the voluntary acts of worship.

Whoever loves Allāh will not disobey Him, though disobedience does not contradict the basis of love (*asl al-maḥabbah*) but it does oppose its perfection. How many people love good health yet eat foods which are harmful to them? The reason for this is lacking knowledge and overpowering desire and thus he becomes unable to perform the rights of love (*ḥaqq al-maḥabbah*). What indicates this is the ḥadīth of Nu‘aymān¹¹ who was brought before Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) drunk one day and thus punished according to the *ḥadd*. A man began cursing him, saying: “How many times has he is brought [before the Prophet to be punished].” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Do not curse him for he loves Allāh and His Messenger.”¹²

Thus, disobedience does not expel one from the scope of love, it rather expels him from the scope of complete and perfected love.

Also from the signs of love is to be busy with the *dhikr* of Allāh, it should not leave one’s tongue or heart, for whoever loves a thing will remember it often by necessity and all which is connected to it.

Thus, from the sign of loving Allāh is loving to remember Him, and loving the Qur’ān which contains His Words, and loving Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ). Allāh said:

قُلْ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

“Say, ‘If you should love Allāh, then follow me, [so] that

¹⁰ Refer to Ibn ul-Qayyim’s *Dhamm ul-Hawwa wa Athb’ibi* (Dār ‘Ammār).

[TN]: The above was translated by Dr Saleh al-Saleh (*raḥimabullāh*) as A Chapter on the Dispraise of *al-Hawwā* by Imām Ibnul-Qayyim.

¹¹ Ibn ‘Amr, he died during the time of Mu‘āwiyah (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*), for his biography refer to al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr, *al-Iṣābah*, vol.10, p.179.

¹² The origin of it was reported by al-Bukhārī, vol.4, p.492; also see *al-Fath*, vol.4, p.77

Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 31]

Some of the Salaf said: ‘I had found the sweetness of confidential discourse with Allāh and I was addicted to reciting the Qur’ān. Then for a period of time I stopped and then I had a dream and a voice said:

If you claim to love Me, why have you fled from My Book?

Or have you not reflected on My subtle reproach?’

Another signs of love also is to be intimacy (*uns*) with seclusion (*kebulwa*),¹³ confidential discourse with Allāh, reciting Allāh’s Book, persevering with *tahajjud*, being concerned with the calm of the night and pure times free of obstacles. The least level of love is to seek pleasure with the Beloved and gain favour by confidential discourse with Him.

It has been reported that one of Allāh’s worshippers was in an orchard and he looked at a bird which was nesting and singing in one of the trees. He said: ‘I will move my *masjid* next to that tree so that I can find solace with this bird.’ He did that and then Allāh revealed to this Prophet: “Tell so and so the worshiper that you find solace with the creation and I will debase you to a level from which your actions will never redeem you.”

Thus, the sign of love is complete intimacy (*kāmal al-uns*) with confidential discourse with the Beloved and complete favour seeking is by seclusion and complete repugnance (*kāmal al-istiḥāsh*) from all which contradicts this seclusion.

When love (*maḥabbah*) and intimacy (*uns*) dominate, seclusion and confidential discourse with Allāh becomes the coolness of the eye

¹³ But not in the newly-invented way many of the innovators do during this era!

(*qurraṭ'ayn*) and averts all worries, indeed love and intimacy immerse his heart to the extent that he does not understand affairs of the worldly life which he does not hear of frequently such as the lover in love.

Another from the signs of love is to feel sorrow for *dhikr* of Allāh which has passed by him, seek favour by acts of obedience which he does not deem as a burden on him and which he removes any tiresome aspects from their performance.

Thābit al-Bunānī (*raḥimahullāh*) said: "I endured the *Ṣālāh* for twenty years and I sought favour from Allāh from it twenty years."

Al-Junayd said: "The sign of love is constant activity and perseverance with one's desire exhausts the body but not the heart."

Examples of this are present and visible, for a lover does not feel burdened in striving for his beloved, and gaining pleasure in his heart by serving him, even if he is injured in his body, the love is dominant. So whoever's beloved is more beloved to him than laziness will abandon laziness in order to serve him, and if is more beloved to him than wealth he will abandon wealth out of love of him.

Another sign is to be compassionate and merciful to all the servants of Allāh while remaining harsh to all His enemies, as He said:

أَشَدَّاءَ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رَحَمَاءَ بَيْنَهُمْ

"hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves."

[*al-Fath* (48): 29]

For Allāh he does not fear the blame of the blamers and the anger of the one with aversion does not avert him. These are the signs of

love, so whoever has these signs has perfected his love and his drink in the Afterlife will be purified. Whoever has mixed his love of Allāh with love of other than Allāh, then he will gain favour in accordance with his love, and his drink will be mixed with some of the drink of those drawn near (*muqarrabūn*) as He said:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ تَعْرِفُ فِي
وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٢٤﴾ يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْتُومٍ ﴿٢٥﴾
خَتَمُهُ مِسْكٌ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَمُرَاجَعُهُ
مِنْ تَسْنِيمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

“The righteous will be in delight, on adorned couches, observing. You will recognize in their faces the radiance of pleasure. They are given to drink pure wine, sealed, whose seal is musk—for this let all those strive who strive for bliss—and mixed with the waters of *tasnim*, a spring whence those brought near to Allāh drink.”

[*al-Mutaffifin* (83): 22-28]

He also said:

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا
يَرَهُ ﴿٧﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ﴿٨﴾

“So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it, And whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.”

[*al-Zalzalah* (99): 7-8]

Another sign is that he has fear in his love between awe (*hayba*) and glorification (*ta‘ẓīm*), as fear does not oppose love. The elite among lovers (*khusuṣ al-muḥibbīn*) feel fear at the station of love while others feel nothing. Certain of their fears are stronger than others. The first fear is the fear of Allāh’s turning away, but the second fear is more intense: this is the fear of Allāh’s veiling Himself. Even more intense than that is the fear of banishment from Allāh.

Yet another sign of love is to hide the love and stay away from claiming it, and concealing ones spiritual exhilaration (*wajd*) and love as a form of veneration of the Beloved and as glorification of Him. Love is a secret of the lover, yet amazement and gratitude could emerge from the lover and love could emerge from him unintentionally and for this he would be excused, as some of them said

Whoever's heart is occupied with someone else, how will he be?
And whoever hides it in his eyelids how can he hide it?

Section Six:

Exposition of the Meaning of Intimacy with Allāh and Contentment with Allāh's Decree

Know that whoever is dominated by intimacy (*uns*) will have no desire for solitude and seclusion, as intimacy with Allāh is accompanied by apprehension (*tawahhush*) of other than Him, and the most burdensome of things on his heart is all which blocks seclusion [with Allāh].

'Abdu'l-Wāḥid Ibn Zayd said: 'I said to a monk: 'Seclusion has amazed you.' He replied: 'If you had tasted the sweetness of seclusion (*ḥalāwat al-khalwa*) you would long for it more than your soul.' I said: 'When does a servant [of Allāh] taste the sweetness of intimacy (*ḥalāwat al-uns*) with Allāh?' The monk said: 'When affection and communication is purified.' I said: 'When is affection purified?' The monk replied: 'When his concerns are gathered and is one and only concerned is obedience [to Allāh].'

So if it is said: 'What is the sign of intimacy?' It should be said in response: its special sign is the chest becoming constricted (*daiq al-ṣadr*) with living among the creation.

Know that intimacy, if it remains, overpowers and is established, can produce a type of uninhibitedness (*inbisāf*) and forwardness (*idlāl*) which could be rejected on face value due to the impudence and lack of decorum within it, even though this is possible from one who has established the station of intimacy (*maqām al-uns*). But for it manifesting from one who does not understand this station then the person could fall into unbelief (*kufr*).

As has been relayed from Abū Ḥafs that he one day was walking and a confused man stopped him in the street. Abū Ḥafs said to him: 'What's wrong with you?' The man replied: 'I have lost my donkey and I do not have another one to replace it.' Abū Ḥafs paused for a while and then said: 'By Your might! I will not take a step until his donkey returns.' Then the donkey emerged.

It was reported from Barkh al-ʿĀbid that he went out looking for water and said: 'O Lord, You are not miserly, please release what you have [of water].' Then after an hour it rained.

It is not far off for something being possible for a person that is not possible for another, as for contentment (*riḍā*) with Allāh's Divine Decree then it is of the highest stations of those brought near (*a'lā maqāmāt al-muqarrabūn*) and it is of the fruits of love, and its reality is obscure and thus not uncovered except by those who understand it from Allāh.

From the merits of contentment is what was reported in the ḥadīth that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "If Allāh Wants good for a servant, He Makes him pleased with what has been decreed for him."¹⁴

Allāh inspired Dāwūd (*ʿalayhis-salām*): 'You will not return to Me

¹⁴ Relayed by Suyūṭī in *al-Jāmiʿ al-Kabīr*, #37 and he ascribed it to al-Daylamī in *al-Firdaws* from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*).

I say: it is weak as he documented in his introduction.

with anything more pleasing to Me and more obliterating to your sins than being contentment with My Decree.’

‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭālib (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) looked at ‘Adiyy Ibn Ḥātim and saw that he was worried, and said to him: “O ‘Adiyy, what is with you that I see you worried and grieved?” ‘Adiyy replied: “What should prevent me when my sons have been killed and my eye gouged out?” ‘Alī said: “O ‘Adiyy, whoever is content with Allāh’s Decree, will be rewarded, and whoever is not pleased with Allāh’s Decree, his actions will be rendered null and void.”

Abū’l-Dardā’ (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) went to visit a man who was dying and praising Allāh. Abū’l-Dardā’ said to him: “You are right, if Allāh Decrees a matter He Loves for there to be contentment with it.”

Ibn Mas‘ūd (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “Allāh out of His Justice and Action, has put pleasure and joy with certainty and contentment, and worry and grief with doubt and fury.”

‘Alqamah said about Allāh’s saying,

وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ

“And whoever believes in Allāh—He will guide his heart.”

[*al-Taghābun* (64): 11]

It means: “A calamity which has befallen a man, so that he knows it is from Allāh and submits to it and is content [with it].”

Abū Mu‘āwiyah al-Aswad said in regards to Allāh’s saying:

فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً

“We will surely cause him to live a good life.”

[*al-Nahl* (16): 97]

That it means ‘pleasure and contentment.’

In the ḥadīth:¹⁵ a Prophet complained to his Lord, Mighty and Majestic, about starvation and poverty for ten years. Allāh did not answer in a way which he wanted and then Allāh revealed to him: 'How long have you been complaining? This is how I have decreed your life in the Mother of the Book before the creation of the heavens and earth. This is what I have decreed for you before the creation of the world. Do you want Me to recreate the world for your sake? Do you want Me to substitute what I have decreed for you? So that what you love is above what I love, and what you want above what I want? By My Might and Honour, if do not remove such impositions from your heart I will erase you from Prophethood.'

In the Psalms of Dāwūd (*'alayhis-salām*) it is mentioned: 'Do you know which people will cross the bridge (*ṣirāṭ*) the quickest? Those who are pleased with My Judgement and their tongues are moist with my remembrance. Dāwūd (*'alayhis-salām*) said: 'O my Lord, who is the most detested servant unto You? Allāh said: 'A servant who sought My Counsel (*istikhāra*) about a matter and then when I choose he was happy with it.'

'Umar Ibn 'Abdu'l-'Azīz said: 'I have no happiness left except with the Divine Decree.' It was said to him: 'What do you love?' He replied: "What Allāh has decreed."

Al-Ḥasan said: 'Whoever is happy with what has been decided for him, finds it sufficient and Allāh blesses it for him. And the one who is unhappy with what has been decreed for him, does not find it sufficient will not be blessed in it.'

'Abdu'l-Wāḥid Ibn Zayd said: 'Contentment [with Divine Decree] is Allāh's Great Door, the Paradise of this life and the tranquillity of the worshippers.'

¹⁵ I could not find a source for this.

Some of them said: “None will have the loftiest degrees in the Afterlife than those pleased with Allāh for all conditions. Whoever is given contentment [with Allāh’s Decree] has attained the most virtuous degree.”

A Bedouin awoke one day and found that all of his camels had died, he said:

No, By the One to Whom I am a servant in His Worship,
If not for the enemies,
It would please me to be tested in its blessings,
Even if anything that Allāh decrees has not yet happened

Section Seven:
Exposition on Contentment and
Opposing Desire

Contentment (*ridā*) can be imagined in that which opposes desire (*hawā*), and what explains this is if a person became sick, it may hurt him at times but he is still pleased with it. He wants it to increase with his intelligence even though it may be disliked to his nature he still attains reward by it. He is like one who uses cupping therapy (*hijāmah*) or venesection (*faṣḍ*) even though it may harm, he is still pleased with it and seeks to have it done.

Likewise, all who travel in order to seek a profit will encounter difficulty in travelling yet due to him loving the fruits of his travels will deem such difficulties as good and he will be pleased with them. All who are afflicted from Allāh yet have certainty (*yaqīn*) will anticipate the reward over and above what he has gone through and will thus be pleased with what he has been afflicted with and thank Allāh for it. It is also possible that love (*maḥabbah*) overcomes him wherein the lover’s view is based on the wants of the Beloved and his sense of

pain is invalidated by excess love and that is not something strange. As a man on the run while being in a state of anger (*ghaḍab*) or fear (*khaḥḥ*) may become injured yet he will not sense it while in that state. This is because his heart has become enamoured and a heart like this does not comprehend anything else. This is what also happens with contemplative visions (*mushābadāt*).

Al-Junayd (*raḥimabullāh*) said: "I asked Sariyā:¹⁶ does a love feel the pain of affliction? He replied: 'No.'"

We have reported from many people who were afflicted that they used to say: 'If we were cut into pieces that would not increase except in love [for Allāh].'

It was mentioned prior that excess love can remove the sense of pain and this is imaginable within love among the creation, as one of them relayed: 'One of our neighbours had a slave girl whom he loved and then she became ill. He used to sit and prepare soup for her. Once he was stirring the pot and she groaned. He became astonished and the spoon fell out of his hand and so he began stirring with his hand until his finger burnt off yet he did not realise it.'

What supports this is the story of the women who cut their hands when they witnessed Yūsuf (*'alayhis-salām*) and they did not sense any pain.¹⁷

What we have mentioned makes it clear that pleasure with what

¹⁶ He is al-Saqṭī, and he is famous.

[TN]: Abū'l-Ḥasan Sariyā [or 'Sirrī'] al-Maghallis al-Saqṭī (d. 257 AH), from Baghdad and a student of Ma'rūf al-Karkhī and a teacher of al-Junayd. Venerated by the *Ṣūfī* and a number of odd and uncorroborated reports are ascribed to him. Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned in *Majmū' al-Fatawā*, vol.10, p.412 that one of the *Ṣūfīs* went to visit Sariyā al-Saqṭī and when the *Ṣūfī* saw that Sariyā had a pen and ink the *Ṣūfī* left and did not sit with him!

¹⁷ See *Sūrah Yūsuf* (12): 31

opposes one's desire is not impossible. If this is possible in regards to the creation and their motivations then it is also possible in regards to Allāh and the motivations for the Afterlife take precedence. This is possible from three angles:

The First is the believer's knowledge that Allāh's plan is better than his plan, for the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allāh does not decree anything for a believer except that it is good for him."¹⁸

Makhūl said: 'I heard Ibn 'Umar (*raḍīy Allāhu 'anhū*) say: 'A man made istikhārah, then Allāh decided for him but the man is unhappy with it, not looking at the consequences, even though it is better for him.'

Masrūq said: 'A man in a rural area lived with his family and had a dog, a donkey and a cockerel. The cockerel used to crow for Salāh, the donkey used to carry water and the *kehiba*¹⁹ and the dog used to guard them. One day a fox came and ate the cock, and they all grieved. The man said: 'Perhaps there is good in this.' Then a few days later a wolf came and ravaged the donkey, and they grieved. The man said: 'Perhaps there is good in this.' Then the dog became sick and died. They grieved and the man said: 'Perhaps there is good in this.' Then they awoke that day and found that the people who lived near them had been taken captives and only the man and his family remained. Their neighbours had everything taken from them and the screams and shouts could be heard. Yet the Bedouin and his family had nothing which could be taken as their dog, donkey and cock had all already gone.

Sa'īd Ibn al-Musayyib said: 'Luqmān said to his son: 'O my son,

¹⁸ Aḥmad, vol.3, p.117, from Anas; also relayed by al-Ḥaythamī, *al-Majma'*, vol.7, p.210 and he said about it: "reported by Aḥmad and Abū Ya'lā, the narrators in Aḥmad's version are all trustworthy, and one of the routes for it with Abū Ya'lā contain narrators who are narrators in the ṣaḥīḥ except for Abū Sha'labah who is *thiqab* [trustworthy]."

I say: it has a number of supporting narrations

¹⁹ A small tent made from fur or wool.

whatever befalls you, be pleased with it, good or bad, as it is good for you.' His son said: 'As for this then I am unable to give it without knowing the reality of what you tell me.' Luqmān said: 'O my son, Allāh has sent another Prophet, so let us go and visit him and he will explain what I have said to you, so let's go to him.' They each travelled on a donkey and took appropriate provisions with them for the journey. They travelled for a few days and nights until they reached the edge of the desert (*mazāfah*) and they crossed it with ease by Allāh's Will though it took them the whole day. The heat intensified and their water and provisions ran out and their donkeys became tired so they came off and walked by foot. As they walked Luqmān saw some blackness and smoke in front of him and said: 'That must be trees, buildings and people.'

As they walked Luqmān's son stepped on a bone, hurt his foot and fell unconscious. Luqmān rushed to his son, grabbed him and took the bone out with his teeth and he ripped his Imāmah and used it to bandage his son's leg. Luqmān looked at his son and began crying and the teardrops fell onto the cheeks of his son who then awoke. He saw his father crying and said: 'O my dear father, you are crying yet you say: "This is good for me." How is this case while you are crying? Our food and water has depleted and it is just you and me here.'

Luqmān said: 'My son, I am crying because I hoped to save your life with all that I possess in this worldly life as I am a father and a father has mercy [for his children]. As for you asking: 'how this can be good?' Then perhaps what has been averted from you is far severe than what you have been tested with, and perhaps what you have been tested with is easier than what has been averted from you.' While Luqmān was speaking with his son he looked in front of him and did not see the blackness or the smoke, he then said to himself: 'I do not see anything.' Then he said: 'I certainly saw it, perhaps my Lord has done something with what I saw.'

While he was reflecting about that he looked and saw a person wearing a white thobe approaching them on a horse which was Ab-laq in colour²⁰ and touching the air. The man did not descend from his horse until he was close to them and then shouted out: 'Are you Luqmān?' Luqmān replied: 'Yes.' The man said: 'What did your foolish son say to you?' Luqmān said: 'O servant of Allāh, who are you?! I hear your words but I do not see your face!?' He said: 'I am Jibrīl and only a close angle or Prophet can see me, otherwise you would see me. So what did your foolish son say to you?'

Luqmān replied: 'You already know?' Jibrīl said: 'I have no knowledge of your affair except that the angels who protect you have informed me. My Lord has instructed me that this city and its people are to be destroyed, and your protecting angels informed that you two were on your way there. So I asked my Lord to prevent you two from me as He Wills. He prevented you two from me by testing you with your son and if not for that then you would have been destroyed with everything else.' Then Jibrīl wiped his hand on the foot of Luqmān's son and up he stood, he then wiped his hand on the bag in which they had food and behold it was full of food. He wiped his hand on the vessel they used for water and behold it was full of water. Then he carried the two of them and their donkeys and whisked them off at the speed of a bird back to their home which they had left a few days before.

The second is pleasure with pain, due to the reward which is anticipated, as we mentioned before about pleasure with venesection (*faṣḍ*) and cupping therapy (*hijāmah*) and drinking potent medicines which will bring cures.

The third is pleasure with pain on its own merits and not for anything else, indeed as it is what the Beloved wants. The most

²⁰ i.e. a black and white horse

pleasurable thing with him is that which pleases his Beloved, even if it involves his own death, as one of them said: ‘What is an injury if pain pleases you?’

It was mentioned prior that love can overcome to the extent that it can astonish a person from even feeling pain, and it is inappropriate to reject that from one who has lost himself in love of Allāh and gone to excess in his love. Whoever does not taste love does not know of its wonders, by my life²¹ whoever loses their hearing will reject the pleasure of instruments and tones,²² thus the one who loses a heart has to reject these pleasures which have no shelter except in the heart.

Section Eight:

An Exposition that Supplication is not in Conflict with Contentment [with Divine Decree]

Know that supplication (*du‘ā*) does not conflict with contentment (*riḍā*) [with Divine Decree], nor does disliking disobedience, its people and causes and striving to remove it.

As for supplication then we worship Allāh by it and Allāh has praised some of His servants by saying:

وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا

“They called to Us in longing and in fear”

[*al-Anbiyā*’ (21): 90]

²¹ This type of oath is permissible as Shaykh Ḥammād al-Anṣārī noted in his treatise *al-ʾIḥlāl bi anna* “li ‘Umri” *Laysat min al-Īmān* [The Announcement that the Expression “By My Life” is Not from Faith]. It was published in the journal of the Islamic University of Madīnah 7th Safar 1394 AH [1st March 1974 CE].

²² These forms of diversion are impermissible in our religion as the notable scholars have concurred, refer to the book by al-Ājurri, *Taḥrīm ul-Nard wa’l-Shaṭranj wa’l-Malāḥi* [The Prohibition of Backgammon, Chess and Diversion].

The supplications of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and other Prophets and righteous people are well known.²³

As for rejecting disobedience and not being pleased with it, then we worship Allāh with this and censure the one who is pleased with it, likewise hatred of the unbelievers and evildoers and censuring them. The supporting testimonies for this are found in the Qur'ān and the transmitted reports are abundant.

So if it is said: 'You have relayed reports about pleasure with Allāh's Divine Decree (*qadā*), but if disobedience is not from Allāh's Divine Decree, this is not possible. If it is from His Divine Decree and you dislike it, you would dislike His Divine Decree. So how can the two be combined?'²⁴

Know that what deceives those who are deficient in understanding the 'secrets of knowledge' (*asrār al-'ilm*), which has even deceived a people [of righteousness], is that they viewed that keeping silent about censuring was a station of pleasure and then named it 'good character' (*ḥusn al-khuluq*). Yet in reality this is pure ignorance. Rather we say: pleasure and dislike are two opposites. If you were pleased with something from one angle and also disliked it from another, there is no contradiction in this. Like if your enemy, who was also an enemy to your other enemies, dies. You would dislike this, as the enemy of your enemy has died, yet you would also be pleased with it from the angle of him being your enemy, likewise is the case with disobedience:

One aspects pertains to Allāh, in that He chose it and He willed it, so you are pleased with it from this aspect, in submitting to the

²³ There are well known in the books of the Sunnah, refer to Ibn ul-Sunnī, *Muhadḥḥab 'Amal ul-Yawm wa'l-Layla*.

²⁴ Refer to al-Hāfiẓ Ibn ul-Qayyim, *Shifā' ul-'Alīl*, p.278

Owner of Sovereignty (*Mālik al-mulk*).

The other aspect regards of the servant, in that his earnings, description and signs are all despised according to Allāh in that He has subjected on him distance and wrath, and so from this aspect is dispraised and censured. This is not discovered with examples, so if a beloved person among the creation said in front of his lover: 'I want to distinguish between those who love me and those who hate me, so for this I will establish a truthful criterion for that. I will beat someone severely to make him curse me, and when he does so I will hate him and I will take him as an enemy. Whoever loves such a person I will inform is also my enemy, and whoever hates such a person I will inform is my beloved and my friend.' He does this and attains his objective of the person cursing him, every true lover of the person beaten will say: 'as for your plan in beating this person and harming him, then I love him. As for his abuse of you then that was also wrong on his part and I dislike as he rather should have been patient and not abusive.'

Similarly, is in regards to Allāh's subjection of desires and disobedience in the servant, and His dislike of his disobedience.

So it is obligatory on every servant who loves Allāh to hate what Allāh Hates and to have enmity to what Allāh has enmity to and to distant it from his presence even if he is coerced to oppose it [what Allāh hates]. That which distances from the degrees of closeness (*darajāt al-qurb*) to Allāh must be hated by all lovers [of Allāh] so as to concur with their love [of Allāh], and this is done by them manifesting anger to, and distancing themselves from, whomever the Beloved shows anger.

With this, all of the reports which have been relayed about loving and hating for Allāh are acknowledged, along with being severe against the unbelievers and exaggerating in this hate of them. And

along with being pleased with the Divine Decree of Allāh from the aspect that He decreed it and all of this is from the secrets of the Divine Decree (*sirr al-qadr*) and there is no concession within it. Both good and evil are within the Divine Will (*mashi'ah*) and Want (*irādah*) however evil is disliked and good is loved.

Thus, what takes precedence is to be silent and take manners from the manners of the Divine Legislation and to stop at all of what the creation worship Allāh with, combining pleasure with Allāh's Divine Decree and hating disobedience, and Allāh knows best.

There is a report connected to love:

It was said that Allāh revealed to Dāwūd (*'alayhis-salām*): 'If those who deliberate knew what I had waiting for them, and My Kindness to them, and My love for them to stop their disobedience, they would die out of longing for Me and tear themselves part out of love of Me. O Dāwūd this is My Will for those who deliberate, so then what about My Will with those who obey Me. O Dāwūd, a servant is in most need of Me if he deems himself sufficient from Me; and a servant is the most honourable with Me when he returns to Me.'

A woman from the worshippers said: 'By Allāh, I smelled life and if I was to find death being sold I would buy it out of longing for Allāh and the love to meet Him.' It was said to her: 'Do you have trust in your actions [as being accepted by Allāh]?' She replied: 'No! However due to My Love of Him and my good suspicion of Him, do you view that He would punish me while I love Him so?'

THE SEVENTH FOUNDATION

On Intention, Sincerity and Truthfulness

(*al-niyya wa'l-ikhlās wa'l-ṣidq*)

Know that the masters of the hearts, who have the insight of faith (*baṣīra al-īmān*) and the illuminations (*anwār*) of the Qur'ān, have uncovered that there is no way to attain happiness (*sa'āda*) except by knowledge (*'ilm*) and worship (*'ibāda*).

Consequently, all people are destroyed except those who know and those who know are destroyed except those who practice, and those who practice are destroyed except those who are sincere and the sincere ones are themselves in great danger.¹

For action (*'amal*) without intention (*niyya*) is pain (*'inā'*) and, whereas intention without sincerity (*ikhlās*) is ostentation (*riyā'*), and sincerity without attainment [of the objective] is vanity (*habā'*), Allāh said:

وَقَدْ مَنَّا عَلَىٰ مَنَعْمَلُوا مِن عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَنْثُورًا ﴿٢٣﴾

“And We shall turn to what deeds they have done, and all

¹ We have commented on such expressions prior.

about We shall make theses deeds a scatter of dust.”

[*al-Furqān* (25): 23]

If only I knew how the intention of one who does not know the reality of intention can be rectified; or how one who has rectified his intention can be sincere if he does not know the reality of sincerity; or how a sincere one can seek truthfulness from himself when he has not ascertained its meaning.

The first task for a servant who wants to obey Allāh is to firstly know what ‘intention’ (*niyya*) is so as to obtain understanding. Then he corrects it with action after understanding the reality of truthfulness and sincerity which are two means by which the servant obtains salvation and deliverance. In this regard we will mention three sections:

Section One:

Intention, its Nature, Merit and Related Issues

Allāh has said:

وَلَا تَقْرُدُوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْعَدْوَةِ وَالْعَشيِّ يُرِيدُونَ
وَجْهَهُ

“Do not turn away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, wishing for His countenance.”

[*al-An‘ām* (6): 52]

What is meant by this wishing (*‘irādah*) is intention.

‘Umar ibn al-Khattāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: I heard Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) say: “Actions are by virtue of their intentions. Whoever migrates for Allāh and His Messenger, then his *hijrah* [emigration] will be for Allāh and His Messenger. Whoever migrates to gain

a worldly benefit or for a woman to marry then his *hijrah* will be for that which he migrated.”²

Abū Mūsā who said: ‘A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger, a man fights for the spoils, a man fights so that he will be mentioned and a man fights so that he will be seen [as being brave]—which of them has fought in Allāh’s Path?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever fights to make the word of Allāh the Uppermost, he is the one who has fought in Allāh’s Path.” Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.³

Jābir (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “You have left some people in Madīnah, you never cross a valley or traverse a path except that they accompany you in reward. They have been held due to sickness.” Reported by Muslim⁴ and also Bukhārī⁵ from the ḥadīth of Anas.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶ from the ḥadīth of Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever intends a good deed yet does not get around to doing it will have a good deed written for him.”

Abū Kabshah al-Anmārī who said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The similitude of this *ummah* is like four people: a man to whom Allāh has given wealth, property and knowledge, he works with his wealth and spends out what he should from it; and a man to whom Allāh has given knowledge yet has not given wealth and property and says: ‘If I had the wealth which he had I would do as he does with it.

² Bukhārī, vol.1, p.7; Muslim, no.1907; see my lengthy verification of it in my edit to Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah, *Sharḥ ḥadīth innama’l-a’mālu bi’l-niyyāt*.

³ Bukhārī, vol.6, p.21; Muslim, #1904; Tirmidhī, #1646; Abū Dāwud, #2517; Nasā’ī, vol.6, p.23; and Ibn Mājah, #2783.

⁴ Muslim, #1911

⁵ Bukhārī, vol.6, p.34; and Abū Dāwud, #2508

⁶ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.277; and Muslim, #130

Both will be rewarded the same. And a man to whom Allāh has given wealth yet he has not given knowledge and he spends his wealth on trivial matters and does not spend it on what he rightfully should do; and a man who has been given neither wealth nor knowledge and says: “If I had what he had [the third man] I would do what he does with it. Both will be equal in chastisement.”⁷

Abū ‘Imrān al-Jūnī who said: ‘The angels ascend with the deeds and then the King will call out ‘Do away with this record.’ The angels will say: ‘Our Lord, he has said good which we have documented from him.’ Allāh, the Blessed and Exalted will say: ‘He did not do these things for My Face.’ Allāh will also call on the angels to double the reward of so and so from the people. The angels will say: ‘O our Lord, he did not do any [good] deeds?’ Allāh will say: ‘He intended to do so.’

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘The best of actions are: fulfilling what Allāh has obligated, refraining from what Allāh has prohibited and truthful intention.’

Some of them said: ‘Show me an action which I will not cease performing solely for Allāh.’ It was said to him: ‘Intend good, as you will not cease acting even if you not actually do anything, an intention is an action even with no [practical] action. Whoever intends to prayer at night but falls asleep he will have written for him the reward of what he intended to do.’

It has been mentioned in a ḥadīth: “There is no man who has an hour at night in which he intends to spend in prayer, yet falls asleep except that he will have written for him the reward of his prayer. His

⁷ Aḥmad, vol.4, p.230, 231; Tirmidhī, #2427; Ibn Mājah, #4228; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, vol.22, pp.862-870—the isnād is ṣaḥīḥ

sleep will be like charity which compensates it.”⁸

It has been mentioned in a ḥadīth: “The intention of the believer is better than his action.”⁹

Intention (*niyya*), will (*irāda*) and purpose (*qaṣd*) are expressions for one and the same meaning.

Section Two:

Actions are Divided into Three Categories

The first category: Disobedience (*maʿāsi*), intention does not alter it. Like one who builds a *masjid* with unlawful (*ḥarām*) wealth intending good by that. The intention here is of no benefit as intending good via evil is merely another evil. Good actions are only known on account of them being good in the Divine Legislation, so how can it be possible to make evil good, how far [is that from being possible]!

Know that whoever gains nearness to the rulers by building masjids and schools (*madāris*) with unlawful wealth. Like how the evil scholars used to seek proximity to the rulers by teaching worthless sciences to foolish people and those preoccupied in sin. If those people learnt anything they would block Allāh’s Path and fight like dogs over the world, follow their desires (*hawā*) and all of this would go back to their teachers as they knew full well of their corrupt intentions and objectives.

⁸ Aḥmad, vol.6, p.63 from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*), in the chain of transmission is Abū Ja‘far al-Rāzī and he has a bad memory.

⁹ Abū Nu‘aym, vol.3, p.255; al-Khaṭīb, vol.9, p.237; al-Qaḍā’ī, #148—from al-Nawwās Ibn Sam‘ān and within the chain of transmission is an unknown narrator [majhūl]. It has also been reported from Anas yet that isnād is very weak, refer to *al-Fawā’id al-Majmū‘ah*, p.250; *Tadbkirat ul-Mawḍū‘āt*, p.218 and *al-Maqāṣid ul-Ḥasanah*, p.1260.

From this angle, story-tellers¹⁰ teaching stories, even though their aim may be good, their intent of attaining the world and taking wealth from wherever renders their teaching as something which encourages corruption, and you know that obedience can turn into disobedience based on intention.

As for disobedience then it does not become obedience by intention from the outset but if it is appended to a vile intent its sin is doubled.

The second category: acts of obedience (*ta'āt*), which are connected to intentions in their original validity and in their doubling of rewards. As for the basis then one intends to worship Allāh and nothing else, if he intended to show off then it becomes disobedience. As for the virtue being doubled, then that is by an abundance of good intentions. This is because one act of obedience can possibly have the many good intents and he would have rewards for each intent as each is a good deed, and then each good deed will be multiplied by ten of its like.

An example of this is sitting in the *masjid*, it is an act of obedience yet it could have much intent, such as: the intention of waiting to prayer; *i'tikāf*;¹¹ avoiding (*kaff*) time-wasting with things which avert from Allāh and sever one from the *masjid*; to remember Allāh in the *masjid* and the likes. This is the way to increase intentions and you can make other analogies based on that will all good actions. There is no action except that it can carry multiple intents.

The third category: permitted actions (*mubāḥāt*), as there is nothing

¹⁰ Dr Muḥammad al-Ṣabbāgh has a treatise on *al-Quṣṣās* [storytellers] and their history and motivations, it has been published and available, so refer to it!

¹¹ There is some detailed inspection in regards to this which is hidden from many people, refer to *al-Inṣāf fī Ahkām il-I'tikāf*, may Allāh aid its completion, also see the third part of *Irshād ul-Sārī*.

from the permitted actions except that it can carry an intention or intentions with which acts of gaining nearness [to Allāh] can traverse and lofty degrees obtained. The greatest loss is one who is heedless of these and renders himself like a dumb animal.

It is inappropriate for the servant to belittle the steps and moments as he will be asked on the Day of Standing: “Why did you do it? What did you intend?” Like a person who intended to gain nearness [to Allāh] by a permitted action such as the use of scent and he intends by this to follow the sunnah and honour the *masjid*, avert foul odours which can harm the people he comes across.

Al-Shāfi‘ī said: ‘Whoever has a good fragrance will increase his intellect.’

Likewise, treating his head increases its acumen and intelligence and makes it easier for him to comprehend the important aspects of his religion.

One of the Salaf said: ‘I prefer to have an intention in everything even in my food, drink, sleep, entering the toilet, as within all of this it is possible to seek nearness to Allāh. Whoever intends to strengthen himself for acts of worship by eating, and seeks protection of his deen and offspring, who will worship Allāh after him, by marriage, will be rewarded for all of that. So do not belittle any of your movements or words and take yourself to account before you are taken to account. Correct [your intention] before you act and look at your intention in what you leave.’

Know that intention is the soul’s proclivity to what apparently benefits him either now or later. Maybe one has heard some of the ignorant people say “I eat and recite for Allāh’s Sake” and they think

that this is intention, when intention is not like this.¹² Intention is based in the heart and is from Allāh, it is not a matter of choice and it is easy to be found in some cases but not in others. It is easily found predominantly with those who have hearts which incline to the religion and not the world.

In regards to intention, people are in different categories:

Some perform acts of obedience motivated by fear (*kawf*); and some perform actions motivated by hope (*rajāʾ*). There is a station higher than these two which is to do acts of obedience due to Allāh's Majesty and due to Him deserving obedience (*taʿāṭ*) and servitude (*ʿubūdiyya*). This cannot be envisaged from one who is concerned with seeking the world, it is of the loftiest intentions and only a few understand it not to mention apply it. The person who is of this station remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allāh and contemplation (*fikr*) on Him does not surpass him.

Ahmad Ibn Khadrawayh relayed that he saw Allāh in a dream and Allāh said to him: 'All of the people seek from Me yet Abū Zayd seeks Me.'¹³

Our intent is that these intentions fluctuate in levels, who has a heart which is overcome by [one] of these intentions then it is possibly not easy for him to turn away from it anything else. Whoever has an intention for a permitted action (*mubāḥ*), yet not for an embellishment, then the permissible takes priority.

An example of that is when one has the intent to eat and sleep in order to strengthen his body for worship and relax his body. At this

¹² It is an error to verbally pronounce the intention, rather it is an innovation. For a detailed discussion on this refer to Shaykh ul-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah's treatise on *al-Niyyah*.

¹³ There is no way to ascertain the veracity of such a vision, if the report is even authentic. There are many of such reports in this book and they have to be investigated at length!

moment he does not have the intention to pray and fast, eating and sleeping take priority. And even if he tires with worship from his abundant perseverance on it he knows he can rest for an hour with that which is permitted and then return to his activities. At such a time, this is better than worship.

‘Alī (*‘alayhis-salām*)¹⁴ said: ‘Rest the hearts and seek for them wisdom as they become weary as the bodies do.’

Some of them said: ‘rest the hearts’ means: ‘*dhikr*’.

These minute details are not comprehended except by the scholars practising it, for the one who is fully competent in medicine treats one with a hot flush with meat even though it is hot, yet a deficient doctor would not do this. The competent doctor wants the man’s strength to return so as to bear the treatment. Likewise is the case with a skilled fighter, he may flee from an opponent as a trick to entrap him.

Traversing the path of Allāh entirely is a war with *Shayṭān* and treatment for the heart (*mu‘ālaḥja lil-qalb*). Someone of insight who is accomplished [with Allāh’s support] pauses for subtle ruses along [the way] which the weak-minded dismiss. It is inappropriate for them to deem as far off that which is hidden from them. Rather, they are to submit to the people of states (*aṣḥāb al-aḥwāl*) until such secrets are uncovered for them or until they reach that station themselves.

¹⁴ Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajr stated in *al-Fath*, vol.11, p.170: Attention: there is difference of opinion on saying ‘*salām*’ after mention of other than the Prophets, though there is agreement that it is legislated for the living. It has been said that ‘it is absolutely legislated’ and it has been said ‘it is not be said’ this is due to it being a slogan of the Rāfiḍah as al-Nawawī transmitted from Shaykh Abū Muḥammad al-Juwaynī.

I say: ‘These are important words so memorise them!’

Section Three:
Sincerity, its Merits, Reality and Degrees

Allāh said:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

“And they have not been commanded only to worship Allāh, their devotion to Him sincere.”

[*al-Bayyinah* (98): 4]

And He said:

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ

“Is sincere religion not Allāh’s due?”

[*al-Zumar* (39): 3]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to Mu‘ādh Ibn Jabal (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*): “Make your religion sincere and a little action will suffice you.”¹⁵

In the ḥadīth of Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he said:¹⁶ “On the Day of Judgement the angels will come with the records and Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will say: “Away with this one and accept this one.” The angels will say: ‘By Your Honour, we did not write except what occurred. Allāh will say: “This was [done] for other than Me, and this day I will not accept except that which was for Me.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “The angels take up the action of the servant and multiply it and purify it. Allāh will reveal to the angels: “You documented the actions of My servant and I am Ever-Watchful of what is in his own self. My servant was not sincere in his action,

¹⁵ Relayed by al-Suyūṭī in *al-Jāmi‘ al-Saghīr*, #240 and it is weak, he ascribed it to Ibn Abī Dunyā in *al-Ikhlāṣ* and Ḥākim from Mu‘ādh (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Al-Munāwī in *al-Fayḍ*, vol.1, p.217 ascribed it to ad-Daylamī.

I say: it contains weakness and severance.

¹⁶ Meaning: ‘a report from Anas’, as in any case this does not verify a marfū‘ form.

so place him into a prison.” The angels will raise up actions of a servant which they consider to be insignificant and then Allāh will reveal to them: “You documented the actions of My servant, and I am Ever-Watchful of what is in his own self. Double his action and place him in *al-‘illiyīn*.”¹⁷

It was reported from al-Ḥasan that he said: ‘A tree was worshipped other than Allāh, then a man came and said: “I will surely chop down this tree.” He then came to chop it down out of anger for Allāh’s sake but then *Shayṭān* came to him in the form of a man saying: ‘What do you want to do?’ The man replied: ‘I want to chop down this tree which is being worshipped other than Allāh.’ *Shayṭān* said to him: ‘If you yourself do not worship it, how is it harming you?’ The man said: ‘I will chop it down.’ *Shayṭān* said to him: ‘Shall I not sure you something better than that? Do not cut it down and you will find two *dirhams* under your pillow when you wake up every morning.’ The man said: ‘How will such come to me?’ *Shayṭān* said: ‘I will ensure you get it.’ The man returned home and went to sleep. The next morning he found two *dirhams* under his pillow. Yet the next day when he awoke he did not find any money under his pillow, so he left the house angry ready to chop down the tree. *Shayṭān* appeared to him again in the form of a man and said to him: ‘What do you want?’ The man replied: ‘I want to chop down the tree which is being worshipped other than Allāh.’ *Shayṭān* said: ‘You have lied! You will not chop it down.’ The man went to chop it down but then *Shayṭān* hit him, the man fell and *Shayṭān* almost killed him. Then *Shayṭān* said to the man: ‘Do you know who I am?’ He informed him that he was *Shayṭān*, and then *Shayṭān* said to the man: ‘You came the first time out of anger for Allāh, and I had no way to stop you. Yet I was able to deceive you with two *dīnārs* and you abandoned your objective, then when you lost gaining two *dīnārs* you came again out of anger for two *dīnārs*.’

¹⁷ Relayed by al-Suyūṭī in *al-Jāmi‘ al-Kabīr*, q.214 and he ascribed it to Ibn ul-Mubārak from Ḥamzah Ibn Ḥabīb in a mursal form.

I say: I did not see it within Ibn ul-Mubārak’s book *al-Zuhd*

Thus, I was able to gain control over you.'

Ma'rūf al-Kakhī used to beat himself and say: 'O soul, be sincere and purified.'

Abū Sulaymān said: 'Ṭūbā is for whoever corrects even one step by which he intends by it only Allāh's sake.'

It was reported that a man used to go out wearing women's clothes and he attended a wedding party where the women were, or he attended a place where women gather. A pearl was stolen and they screamed 'lock the doors so that we can search.' They searched every person one by one until they came to the man and another woman whom they held. He supplicated to Allāh with sincerity: 'O Allāh, if You save me from this shame I will not return to it again.' The pearl was found with that other woman and they said, 'set free the free woman, we have found the pearl.'

Section Four:

An Exposition of the Reality of Sincerity

Know that all things can be damaged by other things, yet if it is cleansed and purified, be called pure (*ḵbālīṣ*). Purifying (*ikhlāṣ*) is the opposite of associating (*ishrāk*), so he who is not pure [or sincere] (*mukhlīṣ*) associates. However, association (*shirk*) occurs in degrees. Sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) in *tawḥīd* is contrary to *shirk* in the Divine Unity (*ilāhiyya*).¹⁸ Association (*shirk*) may be manifest (*jallī*) or hidden (*ḵaffī*), just like sincerity. For now, we discuss the one who, while motivated by the goal of drawing near [to Allāh], mixes another motive with this, whether that of ostentation (*riyā'*) or something else attributable to the soul.

¹⁸ Meaning: 'Uḅūdiyya, refer to my edit of al-'Allāmah Taqīyuddīn al-Ḥilālī's *Tajrīd ul-Tawḥīd al-Mufīd*.

An example of this is fasting in order to diet along with the intent of gaining nearness to Allāh, or to free a slave so as to be rid of his upkeep or bad character, or making *hajj* so as to be able to travel, or to avert an evil, or to do battle just in order to get some experience in war and to learn about it, or praying at night in order to stay awake and not fall asleep and to past the time while keeping an eye out on his means of transport and family, or to study knowledge in order to make it easy to earn a living, or teaching in order to experience the delight of public speaking, and the likes. When one's motive to gain nearness to Allāh has another purpose with it, which makes his action easier upon him to implement, then his action is expelled from the remit of sincerity.

This is because of the rarity of sincerity and the difficulty of cleansing the heart from such blemishes. Hardly often will a person's actions or acts of worship be free of these matters, so for this reason it is said: whoever is able to experience just one moment of his life sincerely for Allāh's countenance, will attain salvation. This is due to the honour of sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) and the difficulty in the heart being devoid of these blemishes (*shawā'ib*), as the sincere person has no other motive except to draw near to Allāh.

It was said to Sahl: 'What is harder on the soul?' He replied: 'Sincerity if it has no other share within it.'

Know that the unpleasant blemishes which face sincerity fluctuate, some are manifest and some are hidden, and we have mentioned the levels of ostentation (*riyā'*) prior.

From ostentation is that which is more hidden than a black ant¹⁹ and so long as he differentiates in his action for the benefit of the view of a person in a given situation then he is outside the realm of

¹⁹ The ḥadīth of this has been verified prior.

sincerity, and he is not saved from *Shayṭān* except whoever is precise in his inspection and takes solace in Allāh's protection. It could be said: "Two units of prayer, prayed by a scholar are better than seventy prayed by an ignoramus" what is intended by a scholar is one who is aware of the details of the vices (*āfāt*) of action so as to be free of them. The ignoramus on the other hand looks at the outer aspects of worship and the carat gold which is wanted by one who deals in cash is better than a *dīnār* wanted by a foolish person.

Section Five:

Exposition on the Judgement of the Tarnished Act and the Worthiness of the Reward for it

As for actions which are only done out of ostentation (*riyā'*), then they work against the one who does this and not for him. They are reasons for punishment just as actions sincerely for Allāh's countenance are a reason for reward. There is no problem in these two categories however one has to look out for tarnished actions which are mixed with the blemishes of ostentation and self interest.

The people have differed in regards to this over if they necessitate reward or punishment, or nothing at all. The choice between the two is not void of conflict.

What appears to be clear to us, and knowledge is with Allāh, is that we look at the extent of the strength of the motives. If the religious motive is equal to the personal motive then the action is neither for him nor against him. If the motive is for ostentation then it will harm him and obligate punishment, however his punishment is less than that for pure ostentation. If the religious motive is stronger than the other [intent] then he will be rewarded based on the extent of the motive, for Allāh has said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِنْ تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا

“Allāh wrongs not an atom’s weight. But if it be goodness,
He doubles it.”

[*al-Nisā’* (4): 40]

What testifies to what we have mentioned is the consensus of the ummah on the fact that whoever departs for *hajj* yet also has some business he wants to conduct while on his journey, then his *hajj* is correct and he will be rewarded for it even though it was mixed with some self interests, yet as long as he was on *hajj*, as the original motive, then his journey will not be devoid of reward. Likewise is the case for the one who wishes to do battle, if he intends gain war booty then he will be rewarded however his reward will not be the same as the one who is not concerned at all with the spoils of war from the outset, and Allāh knows best.

Section Six:

On Truthfulness, its Merit and Reality

‘Abdu’llāh Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Upon you is truthfulness, for indeed truthfulness guides to righteousness and righteousness guides to Paradise. A man does not cease being truthful until Allāh records that he is truthful.” Reported by Bukhārī and Muslim.²⁰

Bishr al-Hāfi said: ‘Whoever does actions for Allāh with truthfulness will seclude himself from the people.’

Know that the term truthfulness (*sidq*) can be used with a variety of senses:

²⁰ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.423; and Muslim, #2606

1. The first sense: truthfulness in speech, it is a right for every servant [of Allāh] to preserve his speech and not speak except with truthfulness and this is the most famous type of truthfulness and most manifest.

It is a must to stay away from equivocations (*ma'ārīḍ*)²¹ as it involves lying except for one who has a need to adopt such a method as there could be a benefit in using it in some instances. When the Prophet (ﷺ) wanted to wage war he would relay the contrary so that the enemies would not get word of an encroaching attack and thus prepare themselves to fight.²²

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The one who rectifies between two people by saying good [from one about the other] or making up good [said by one about the other] is not regarded as a liar.”²³

2. The second type: Truthfulness in intention (*niyya*) and desire (*irādah*), this depends on sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*). If one's action is mixed with the blemishes of self interest the truthfulness of his intent is rendered void. The person could even be a liar as mentioned in the ḥadīth of the three: the scholar, the reciter and the *mujāhid*. When the reciter [of the Qur'ān] says: “I recited the Qur'ān for the Afterlife”²⁴ he was lying in his intention and desire. The meaning of truthfulness in regards to words by which one's Lord brings salvation, have to be maintained. Like one saying: “I have directed my face to the One Who created the heavens and the earth”, if his heart is preoccupied away from Allāh due to the world then he is deemed as a liar.

²¹ This is being ambiguous and vague in one's speech, refer to *al-Nihāyah*, vol.3, p.212

²² Bukhārī, #2757; Muslim, #2769; Abū Dāwud, #2187; Nasā'ī, vol.6, p.152; Tirmidhī, #5001; Ahmad, vol.3, p.454; Ibn Jarīr, #17447; 'Abdu'l-Razzāq, #9744; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabir*, vol.19, p.42—all from Ka'b Ibn Mālik.

²³ Bukhārī, #1302; Muslim, #2605—from Umm Kulthum bint 'Uqbah.

²⁴ Muslim, #1905; Tirmidhī, #2383; Nasā'ī, vol.6, p.23—from Abū Hurayrah.

3. The third type: truthfulness in promises and fulfilling them. As for the first, then this is like saying “If Allāh were to give me wealth I would spend all of it in charity”, this could be true or he could be uncertain. As for the second, then it is to be truthful in one’s promise, Allāh said:

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ

“Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allāh. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow [to the death].”

[*al-Aḥzāb* (33): 23]

And He said:

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ عَاهَدَ اللَّهَ لَئِ

ءَاتَيْنَا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۖ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۖ خَلَّوْا بِهِ ۖ وَتَوَلَّوْا وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

فَأَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهُ ۖ بِمَا أَخْلَفُوا

اللَّهَ مَا وَعَدُوهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

“And among them are those who made a covenant with Allāh, [saying], ‘If He should give us from His bounty, we will surely spend in charity, and we will surely be among the righteous.’ But when he gave them from His bounty, they were stingy with it and turned away while they refused. So He penalized them with hypocrisy in their hearts until the Day they will meet Him—because they failed Allāh in what they promised Him and because they [habitually] used to lie.”

[*al-Tawbah* (9): 75-77]

4. The fourth type: truthfulness in action (*‘amal*), to cover his inner and outer deeds so that his outward actions do not indicate humility and the likes of inner matters.

Al-Muṭarrif said: ‘If the servant’s inner and outward actions

are covered Allāh, Mighty and Majesty, says: "This one is truly My servant."

The fifth type: truthfulness in the stations of the religion which is of the highest of levels; such as truthfulness in fear (*kawf*), hope (*rajā'*), asceticism (*zuhd*), contentment (*ridā*), love (*maḥabba*) and reliance [on Him] (*tawakkul*) as these matters have principles which are built on them. They also have goals and realities, and the truthful achiever is the one who attains their reality. When a thing dominates and its reality is perfected by someone then such person is said to be truthful (*sādiq*). Allāh said:

لَيْسَ الْإِرَانُ تَوَلَّوْا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِيلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ
الْإِرَانَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ
وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا
وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَاءِ وَجَيْنَ النَّاسِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ
صَدَقُوا وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

"Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but [true] righteousness is [in] one who believes in Allāh, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask [for help], and for freeing slaves; [and who] establishes prayer and gives zakāh; [those who] fulfill their promise when they promise; and [those who] are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous."

[*al-Baqarah* (2): 177]

And He said,

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا
وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ
الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

“The believers are only the ones who have believed in Allāh and His Messenger and then doubt not but strive with their properties and their lives in the cause of Allāh. It is those who are the truthful.”

[*al-Hujurat* (49): 15]

We can put forth a similitude for fear and say: there is no servant who believes in Allāh and is fearful of Allāh, with a fear which renders it applicable to him yet not fully to the level of reality, except that you will see him fear a ruler and how he shudders and quivers out of fear of something bad happening to him. Then you see him fear the Hellfire even though none of this occurs to him when he does an act of disobedience. For this reason, ‘Amir Ibn ‘Abd Qays said: ‘I was surprised by Paradise and how those who claim to seek it sleep, and I was surprised by the Hellfire and how those who claim to flee from it sleep.’

Achieving these matters are very strong, these stations have no intent...either he is weak or he is strong. When he is strong he is referred to as truthful (*sādiq*) and the one who is truthful in all of these stations (*maqāmāt*) is immense, and a servant could have truthfulness in some matters yet not in others. Of the signs of truthfulness is to hide both afflictions and acts of obedience and to dislike the creation coming to know of any of them.

THE EIGHTH FOUNDATION

On Self-Reckoning and Vigilance
(*muḥāsaba wa'l-murāqaba*)

Allāh has said:

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُخَضَّرًا وَمَّا عَمِلَتْ
مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا وَيُحَذِّرُكُمْ
اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٣٠﴾

“The Day every soul will find what it has done of good present [before it] and what it has done of evil, it will wish that between itself and that [evil] was a great distance. And Allāh warns you of Himself.”

[*Āl-ʿImrān* (3): 30]

And He said:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ
الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ
مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

“And We place the scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so no soul will be treated unjustly at all. And if there is [even] the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth. And sufficient are We as accountant.”

[*al-Anbiya'* (21): 47]

And He said:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ
مُسْتَفْقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يُؤْتَيْنَا مَا لَ هَذَا الْكِتَابِ
لَا يَغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا
حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٩﴾

“And the record [of deeds] will be placed [open], and you will see the criminals fearful of that within it, and they will say, ‘Oh, woe to us! What is this book that leaves nothing small or great except that it has enumerated it?’ And they will find what they did present [before them]. And your Lord does injustice to no one.”

[*al-Kahf* (18): 49]

And He said:

يَوْمَ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْنَاًا
لِّبُرْوَاهُمْ ۖ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا
يَرَهُ ۖ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ۖ ﴿٩٩﴾

“That Day, the people will depart separated [into categories] to be shown [the result of] their deeds. So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it, And whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it.”

[*al-Zalzalah* (99): 6-8]

These Qur’anic verses clarify the danger of self-reckoning in the Afterlife, the masters of insight have affirmed that nothing will save them from these dangers except for accountability and truthful

vigilance. Whoever takes himself to account in the worldly life then his account will be lightened on the Day of Judgement. Whoever neglects accountability will have perpetual loss. So when they knew that nothing will save them except obedience. Allāh instructed them to have patience and *murābitah*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا

“O you who have believed, persevere and endure and remain stationed (*rābiṭū*).”

[*Āl-ʿImrān* (3): 200]

They remain stationed (*murābiṭa*) firstly, by conditioning the soul (*mushārāṭa*), then followed by vigilance (*murāqaba*), then with accountability (*muḥāsaba*), then with punishment of the self (*muʿāqaba*), then with self-striving (*mujābada*), then with reproving the self and reprimanding it (*muʿātaba*). In that way, they have six stations; its origin is accountability (*muḥāsaba*) however every account is only after conditioning of the soul (*mushārāṭa*) and vigilance (*murāqaba*). When there is loss it is followed by reproving the self and reprimanding it (*muʿātaba*) and punishment of the self (*muʿāqaba*), and we will deal with such stations in detail.

The First Station:

Conditioning of the Soul (*mushārāṭa*)

Know that just as a merchant seeks the help of his business partner in order to make profit, and sets conditions and holds it to account, likewise the astute one needs the soul to be in a partnership with him and thus he gives it employment and sets conditions for it, guiding it to the path of success. Then he has to watch over the soul as he is not assured from its treachery and wastefulness of the capital. Then he has to take it to account and to fulfil the conditions which he placed

on it. The profit from this trade is the highest level of Paradise (*firdaws al-a'lā*) and so detailing the account in this with the soul is far more important than detailing many profits in the worldly life. Thus the one who possesses firm resolve (*ʿazm*) and believes in Allāh and the Last Day should not neglect taking himself to account (*muhāsaba*) and suppressing it in its movements, habitations and contemplations. Every breath of life is a precious gem which cannot be replaced.

When the servant is free of his obligatory prayer of *fajr*, he has to also free his heart for an hour so as to condition the soul and say to it: "I have no commodity except for life, so if my capital is annihilated there will be despair in trade and making a profit. Today is a new day which Allāh has conferred on me, and He has delayed my time of death, and He has favoured me with it. And if He were to take my life I would hope that He would return me so that I could do righteous actions.

So O my soul, take me to account, for you died and then came back, so do not lay me to waste today. Teach me that the day and the night are twenty four hours and that therefore the servant has twenty-four treasure troves in a day, arranged troves. When one of them is opened for him he sees that it is filled with the light from his good deeds which he did during that hour and he obtains happiness by viewing those lights which if presented to the people of Hellfire would astonish them due to the pain of the Hellfire. Another treasure trove will also be opened for him, which is black and dark and has a foul smell. It is the hour wherein Allāh was disobeyed and he obtains panic and disgrace which if viewed by the people of Paradise would disturb their favour. Another trove will be opened for him yet it will be empty, it contains nothing which neither saddens him nor pleases him. This represents the hour in which he slept, or was heedless or was preoccupied with something which is permitted. He regrets that

it is empty, and experiences the same as a businessman who was able to make extra profits but missed the opportunity.”

Thus, the troves of his time will be presented to him along with his long life and he will say to his soul: “Strive today to fill your [empty] troves, do not fill them with laziness, time-wasting and relaxation, so that you miss out on the levels of *al-‘illiyyin* which other than you will reach.”

Some of them [the righteous ones] said: if an evil-doer is pardoned then has not the reward of the good people been missed out on? This is his guidance to his soul in its use of time. Then he makes an appeal for another piece of guidance to his seven organs; the eyes (*‘ayn*), ears (*udhun*), tongue (*lisān*), stomach (*baṭn*), private parts (*farj*), hands (*yad*) and feet (*rjil*), for them to be subservient to the soul so as to protect and serve it in this eternal business. With this, its actions will be completed and it teaches it that Hell-fire has seven gates ready for each limb and these gates will be clear to the one who disobeyed Allāh with these bodily organs. So he advises it to protect them from disobeying the soul.

As for the eyes, then he protects them from looking at what is not lawful to look at, or looking at a Muslim with the eye of contempt (*ibtiqār*), preference or sufficiency. He should preoccupy the eyes with its business and profits—which is to look at what has been created for him of the wonders of Allāh’s creation. He looks at this with the eye of contemplation. He also looks at good actions so as to follow them, he looks at the book of Allāh and the Sunnah of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ), and the books of wisdom so as to derive benefit.

Thus, it is appropriate to present to each bodily organ that which is relevant to it, especially the tongue and the stomach. We mentioned

the vices of the tongue (*āfāt al-lisān*) prior¹ and how it can be preoccupied from that which it was created for such as *dhikr*, reminder, repeating knowledge, learning, guiding Allāh's servants to His path, rectification between people and other good actions. As for the stomach then it should leave its iniquities and avoid doubts and desires and suffice with a basic quantity. He should stipulate on himself that if he opposes any of that he will reprimand the soul by purging the desires of the stomach so as to surpass them more than indulge in them, and this is what he does with all of his bodily organs.

An investigation of this is lengthy, and likewise the acts of obedience and disobedience of the bodily organs is not hidden. Then he implements its guidance within the acts of worship which he repeats day and night² and with the voluntary acts of worship which he is able to perform and he performs them in abundance. These conditions are to be applied every day until the soul becomes used to them and he can suffice from *mushārāṭa*. However, everyday has to have new incidents with which Allāh has new rulings. Therefore he has a right in this regard. This is common for the one who is preoccupied with worldly affairs such as authority, business etc, as rarely is a day void of these new happenings in which he has to fulfil the right of Allāh. Thus, he has to condition himself with uprightness (*istiḳāma*) and compliance to the truth.

Shaddād Ibn Aws (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) reported that: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "The astute (*kayyis*) is the one who takes himself to account and does actions for after death. The incapable one is the one who allows his self to follow its desires and seeks from Allāh the fulfilment of his own hopes."³

¹ Refer to my edit of al-'Allāmah Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khan's *Ṣiyānat ul-Lisān min 'Athratibi*, may Allāh ease its completion.

² Refer to my treatise mentioned prior, *Muhadbbab ul-'Amal al-Yawm wa'l-Layla*.

³ Its verification was mentioned prior.

‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Take your own souls to account before you are taken to account, and weigh them up before you are weighed and prepare for the Great Presentation,

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ مِنكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ﴿١٨﴾

“That Day, you will be exhibited [for judgement]; not hidden among you is anything concealed.”

[*al-Hāqqah* (69): 18]’

The Second Station: Concerning Vigilance (*murāqaba*)

If a person advises his own soul and conditions it with what we have mentioned, what remains next is for vigilance of the soul. In the authentic ḥadīth about the *tafsīr* of *iḥsān*, when Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) was asked about it he said: “That you worship Allāh as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him then He for sure See you.”⁴ What he intended by this inducing the presence of Allāh’s Magnitude and his watchfulness of this during his acts of worship.

It was said: al-Shiblī visited Ibn Abū’l-Ḥusayn al-Nūrī⁵ while he was sitting tranquil and still. He said to him: ‘From whom did you obtain such vigilance (*murāqaba*) and tranquillity (*sukūn*)?’ Al-Nūrī replied: ‘From the Sinnawr⁶ which we used to have. When they hunted their prey they would keep their heads so still that a hair on their heads would not even move.’

A person has to watch over and attentive to his soul before action and during his action to check as to whether it is moving in accord-

⁴ Bukhārī, vol.1, p.106; Muslim, #9—from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and Muslim (#9) also solely relayed it from ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

⁵ What is correct is: Abū’l-Ḥusayn Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad al-Nūrī, for his biography refer to *Ḥiyyat ul-Awliyā’*, vol.10, p.249, and for this report refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā’*, vol.10, p.101.

⁶ *Ḥurrah* [eagles].

ance with desire or solely for Allāh alone. If it is solely for Allāh, he completes it, if not then he leaves—this is sincerity (*ikhlās*) to Allāh.

Al-Ḥasan said: 'May Allāh have mercy on a servant who stops at his intention. If it is solely for Allāh he completes it, if is for other than Allāh he gives it up.'

This is a servant having vigilance in acts of obedience wherein he is sincere. His vigilance in acts of disobedience is when he undertakes repentance (*tawba*), regret (*nadm*) and bringing such acts to a halt (*iqḷā*). His vigilance in permissible actions is by safeguarding manners (*murā'ah al-adab*) and showing thankfulness (*shukr*) for favours (*ni'ma*), as he is not devoid of favours for which he has to show thankfulness, and he is not devoid of afflictions in which he has to have patience (*ṣabr*)—all of that is from vigilance.

Wahb ibn Munabbih said in regards to the wisdom of the family of Dāwud:

'It is the right of the intelligent one that he does not preoccupied from four hours:

An hour in which his Lord saves him;

An hour in which he takes himself to account;

An hour in which he spends with his brothers who inform him of his faults;

And an hour in which he is free with his own soul and his delights which are lawful and not prohibited. This hour aids him over the other hours and is relaxation for strength. This is the hour in which he is occupied with food and drink, and it is inappropriate for this hour to be devoid of one action which is better than all actions, *dhikr* with contemplation. As the food which he eats contains many wonders which if he reflected on would be better than many actions of the limbs.'

The Third Station:
Accountability after worship (*muḥāsaba*)

Allāh said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ
لِغَدٍّ

“O you who have believed, fear Allāh. And let every soul
look to what it has put forth for tomorrow.”

[*al-Ḥashr* (59): 18]

This is an indication of accountability after an action has been completed, and for this reason ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Take your selves to account, before you are taken to account.’

Al-Ḥasan said: ‘The believer is the guard over his own soul, he holds himself to account.’

It said that the believer is surprised by what amazes him and says: ‘By Allāh, I long for You, and You are my need, however, by Allāh there is no way unto You, how far is the way between me and You.’ He goes to excess and then regains his thinking and says: ‘I did not intend this, what is with me to say such? By Allāh, I will never ever return to the likes of such things *insha’ Allāh*.’

The believers are a people whom the Qur’ān has deemed as trustworthy, prevention is placed between them and what destroys them. The believer is a prisoner in the world seeking to break out of his chains and he is not assured of anything until he meets Allāh. He knows that he will be taken to account in his hearing, seeing, speaking and limbs.

Know that just as the servant has to have time at the beginning of

the day wherein he conditions himself, he also has to have an hour in which he takes himself to account. This is just like a businessman does in the worldly life with his business partners who take account at the end of every day, month and year.

The meaning of accountability after worship (*muḥāsaba*) is that one looks at his capital, profits and losses so that it will be clear to him any additions from deficiencies. The capital in his religion is the obligations; its profits are the voluntary and extra actions; and its losses are disobedience. He first takes the obligations into account, and if he committed any disobedience which preoccupied him with self-chastisement so as to even out what he neglected.

It was said: Tawbah Ibn al-Ṣimmah was in Raqqaḥ,⁷ taking himself to account. One day, when he was sixty years old he counted the days which were twenty-one thousand and five hundred days. He was shocked and cried out: 'Woe to me! The angel has recorded twenty-one thousand and five hundred sins! How is this not the case when each day is ten thousand sins?!' then he fell unconscious and died. They heard a caller cry out: 'he has been taken to the highest level of Paradise!'

Thus, it is a must for the servant to take himself to account in every breath, disobedience of the heart (*ma'ṣiya al-qalb*) and limbs (*jawāriḥ*), every hour, because if a person's acts of disobedience were rolled up into a stone and then thrown at his house, it would utterly destroy his house. However, he tolerates disobedience and they are to be affirmed from him, as Allāh said:

أَخَصَّ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ

"Allāh had enumerated it, while they forgot it..."

[*al-Mujādilah* (58): 6]

⁷ A famous city in Syria today, refer to al-Baghdādī, *Marāṣid ul-Iḥlā'*, vol.2, p.626

The Fourth Station:
Concerning Punishment of the Self (*mu'āqaba*)
for its Shortcomings

Know that when the [true] seeker takes his soul to account and sees some deficiency, or if it committed some disobedience, it is inappropriate for him to neglect it as it will be easy for him to refrain from sins and difficult for him to wean himself off them. Rather, he has to punish the soul with a permitted punishment just as he would his wife and children.

As has been reported from 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that he went out to his grove and then came back and prayed 'aṣr with the people. He said: 'I went out to my grove, came back and prayed 'aṣr with the people. My grove is charity for the poor.'

Layth said: 'He missed the prayer in congregation.' We also reported from him that a matter preoccupied him from the *maghrib* prayer until the stars appeared. When he prayed he then freed two slaves.

It has been relayed that Tamīm al-Dārī (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) slept but did not awake to pray *tahajjud*, so he did not sleep for a year as a punishment for what he did.

Ḥassān Ibn Sinān passed by a room and said: 'For whom has this been built?' Then he chastised himself and said: 'You ask about that which does not concern you?! I will punish you by fasting a year.' So he fasted a year.⁸

As for punishing the soul with other than that which is not permitted, then that is prohibited to do, for example: what has been relayed

⁸ There needs to be some inspection regarding these two reports, as neither of them are the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) whatsoever, refer to the comments of the classifier later.

that a man from the children of Israel put his hand on a woman's thigh and then in order to punish himself for that he burnt his hand off! And another case where a man was going to walk towards a woman [in order to commit immorality] then he stopped and reflected to himself saying: 'What do you want to do?' When he wanted to return his leg he said: 'Woe to you, how far that my leg was about to move towards disobedience, you will not return with me!' So he cut his leg off! While another man looked at a woman and due to that gouged his own eyes out! All of this is *ḥarām*.⁹

That may have been permitted within their Divine Legislations yet some people from our religion have attempted to traverse such a similar path based on ignorance and lack of knowledge, as has been relayed from Ghazwān the ascetic. It is relayed that he looked at a woman and due to that blinded himself!

We have reported from some of them that: one of them was in a state of *janāba* yet the weather was very cold. He viewed that he should withhold from making *ghusl*, yet he made *ghusl* while in his cloak and did not remove until the water was squeezed out of it. The cloak was very thick, weighing more than twenty pounds—this is ignorance in the guise of knowledge. For a person is not to behave with himself like this and I have mentioned¹⁰ much of such arts from those worshipers who act based on ignorance in my book *Talbīs Iblīs*.¹¹

⁹ This is close to what I mentioned in the footnote above.

¹⁰ These are words of al-Hāfiz Ibn al-Jawzī (*rahimahullāh*).

¹¹ For the English Translation please refer to 'The Devil's Deceptions,' by Imām Ibn Jawzī, Published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, UK.

The Fifth Station:
Self-Struggle (*mujāhada*)

When a person takes his soul to account, he has to look at it and if it inclines towards disobedience he punishes it as mentioned prior. If he sees that it is lacking due to laziness in performing any good action or invocations then he has to manner his soul by encouraging it with more invocations as has been relayed from ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he missed a prayer in congregation so then spent the whole of that night in prayer. If his soul finds it hard to do this he must strive according to his ability.

Ibn al-Mubārak said: ‘The righteous would exhort their souls to good willingly, while we do not exhort our souls except grudgingly.’

What aids it is to listen to the reports of the righteous and what has been relayed regarding their virtue. One should try to accompany who of them he is able and follow their examples. Some of them said: ‘If I was slacking for a period in my acts of worship I would look at the face of Muḥammad Ibn Wāsi’ and his striving, and try to do the same for a week.’

‘Āmir Ibn Qays used to pray a thousand units of prayer a day.

Al-Aswad Ibn Yazīd used to fast until he turned yellow.

When Maṣrūq performed *ḥajj* and he did not sleep except when he was in prostration.

Dāwūd al-Ṭā’ī used to drink *al-Fatīta* where bread was sold, he used to recite fifty *ayahs* in between.

Karaz Ibn Wabrah used to complete the Qur'ān three times a day.

'Umar ibn 'Abdu'l-'Azīz and Faṭḥ al-Mawṣilī used to weep blood.

Forty people of the past prayed *fajr* with the *wuḍū'* of 'ishā.

Abū Muhammad al-Harīrī spent a whole year without sleeping or leaning up against a wall, and he did not stretch out his legs. Abū Bakr al-Kattānī said to him: 'How are you able to do all this?' Al-Harīrī responded: 'It knew the truthfulness of my inner, so it aided me in my outer.'

Some people went to visit Zaḥlah the pious woman and speak to her with kindness and she said: 'These are only fleeting days, whoever misses out on today will not comprehend tomorrow, by Allāh my brothers. I will pray what my limbs are able to endure and I will fast for Him for the remaining day of my life, and I will cry as many tears as are able to come from my eyes.'

Whoever wants to look at the biographies of the people [of piety and righteousness] then let him watch their striving, refer to my book entitled *Ṣifat ul-Ṣafwāh*. Within it one will find reports of the people which would make him want to prepare himself as those people have died did. Indeed, he will even hear of the women worshipers, and one will think of his own soul as insignificant upon hearing about them.

The Sixth Station:
Concerning reproving the Self and
Reprimanding it (*mu'ataba*)

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'Whoever despises his own soul for the Sake of Allāh, Allāh will save him from His Wrath.'

Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'I heard 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) enter an orchard and say from behind the wall: 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the leader of the believers?! No way, no way. By Allāh, you will fear Allāh O Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb or He will punish you.'

Al-Bakhtarī Ibn Ḥārithah said: 'I visited a worshipper and he was in front of a fire chastising himself and kept on doing so until he died.'

Some of them used to say if righteous people were mentioned to them 'woe to me and woe to you.'

Know that the worst enemy you have is your own self. You were created inkling to evil and you were instructed to keep it upright, purified and weaned off from the sources of evil, and to control them with the reins of power to worship its Lord. If it is neglectful, it will become uncouth and obstinate and you will not be triumphant with it after. Yet if you make it adhere to self-castigation we will hope that it will become assured (*mutma'in*) and will not be heedless to its reminder.

Your path which you should undertake is for you to acknowledge its ignorance and stupidity and say: 'O soul, how ignorant you are, you claim intelligence and acumen yet you are of the most severe in stupidity and foolishness. Either you know for a fact that you are going to Paradise or the Hellfire? So how can you so sneaky to the

one who does not know where he is going? He could die today or tomorrow. Either you know that death is near and that it comes suddenly without any warning, and it does not care about age. Rather, anyone and everyone can die suddenly, and even if death does not come suddenly, then sickness does come suddenly, and that will lead to death. So why do you not prepare for death when it is close approaching you?

O soul, if your boldness in disobedience to Allāh is due to you believing that Allāh does not see you, then how enormous is your *kufr* (disbelief)! Yet if it is with your knowledge that He is aware of that which you do then how depraved you are and how so little shame you have! Do you have the energy to put up with His punishment? Just try sitting in a sauna (*hammām*) for an hour, or putting your finger into a fire! O soul, if that which is preventing you from uprightness is love of desires, then seek the eternal desires which are pure from anxieties.

What do you say about a sick mind about which a doctor advises that it should avoid water for three days so as to become better and be able to drink constantly for the remainder of his lifetime? What does the mind do regarding fulfilment of his desire? Does it be patient with those three days in order to get the favour of a lifetime? Or does it merely aim to fulfil a temporary desire for the meantime and then after undergo a lifetime of pain? So consider your entire life to be the eternal life of the bliss of the people of Paradise or the torment of the people of the Hellfire... If only I knew, [which] is more severe and longer the pain of patience with desires, or the Hellfire? Whoever is unable to endure patience with the pain of striving how can he endure the pain of the punishment in the Afterlife?

Or does the love of reputation (*ḥubb al-jāh*) preoccupy you? Even

though after your sixty years or so you and your contemporaries have no reputation? Would the world then be left on account of the lowliness of its participants and its many pains and out of fear of the speediness of its annihilation? Do you substitute the company of the Lord of the Worlds for the company of the foolish? This, most of the goods have been lost and only a small residue of life remains, and if you were to comprehend you would regret what you have wasted. Do good deeds in these days so that the days will become long, and prepare your answer to the question. Leave this world like the free and do not leave it like those who have been expelled from it by force. Reflect on this admonishment and if it has no impact on you then cry over what you have committed, so shed tears from the ocean of mercy.

THE NINTH FOUNDATION

On Contemplation (*al-tafakkur*)

Allāh, Glory unto Him, has instructed contemplation (*tafakkur*) and consideration (*tadbīr*) in His Book, and He praised those who contemplate by saying,

وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ
هَذَا بَطَلًا

“and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], ‘Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly.’”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 191]

And He said,

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣﴾

“Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.”

[*al-Ra‘d* (13): 3]

‘Abdu’llāh Ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Allāh Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Reflect on the favours of Allāh and do

not reflect about Allāh.”¹

Abū'l-Dardā' said: 'Reflecting for an hour is better than *qiyām ul-layl*.'

Wahb ibn Munabbih said: 'Long and deep reflection on a matter is not done except that one understands; one does not understand except that he knows and one does not know except that he acts.'

Bishr al-Hāfi said: 'If the people were to reflect on the Magnitude of Allāh they would not disobey Him.'

Al-Firyābī said about Allāh's saying:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ
الْحَقِّ

"I will turn away from My signs those who are arrogant upon the earth without right."

[*al-A'raf* (7): 146]

That it means: "Their hearts were prohibited from reflecting on My Affair."

Dāwūd al-Ṭā'ī one night was on the roof and reflected on the realm of the heavens and the earth and then he fell into the house of his neighbour. His neighbour ran towards him naked with sword in hand and when he saw it was Dāwūd and asked: 'O Dāwūd what

¹ Reported by Ṭabarānī, *al-Awsat*, #6456; al-Lālikā'ī, *al-Sunnah*, vol.1, p.119, nos.1-2; al-Bayhaqī, *Shu'ab ul-Īmān* (Indian Print), vol.1, p.75—and the isnād is very weak for it contains al-Wāzi' Ibn Nāfi' who is munkar ul-ḥadīth, as noted in *al-Majma'*, vol.1, p.8.

However, Ibn 'Asākir relayed it in *al-Amālī*, vol.19, p.50, no.1 from Abū Hurayrah with a weak isnād which was also relayed from 'Abdu'llāh Ibn Salam by Abū Nu'aym, *al-Hifḍ*, vol.6, pp.66-67 and this also contains weakness. There are from Abū Dharr and Ibn 'Abbās respectively.

It is ḥasan *insha' Allāh* as concluded by our Shaykh, al-'Allāmah al-Albānī in *Silsilah Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #1788, and from him I reached this precious verification.

happened to you [to fall through into my house]?’ Dāwūd replied: ‘I did not even realise it [i.e. that I fell through].’

Yūsuf Ibn Asbāṭ said: ‘Indeed, the world was not created so as to look at it, rather to look with it at the Afterlife.’

Sufyān al-Thawrī used to reflect so intensely that he used to urinate blood.

Abū Bakr al-Kattānī said: “Fear when paying attention to heedlessness, severance from personal interests and shuddering out of fear [of Allāh] is better than the worship of all jinn and men.”

Section one:

Exposition on the Essence of Contemplation and its benefits

Know that reflection can cover matter related to the religion and matters related to other than the religion, yet our intent here is what is related to the religion. The explanation of this is lengthy and a person should look at four types: acts of obedience (*taʿāt*), acts of disobedience (*maʿāsī*), destructive traits (*ṣifāt al-muhliqāt*) and traits for salvation (*ṣifāt al-munjiyāt*). Do not be heedless to your own self and not on your traits which are either distant or near to Allāh. Every seeker (*murīd*) has to have a notepad in which he notes the destructive traits, traits for salvation, traits of disobedience and obedience and every day he revises them.

In regards to the destructive traits it is suffice to look at ten, as whoever is free of them will be free of others, they are: miserliness (*bukhl*), pride (*kibr*), vanity (*ʿujb*), ostentation (*riyāʾ*) envy (*ḥasad*), severe anger (*shiddat al-ghaḍab*), over-eating (*sharra al-taʿām*), extreme sexual appetite (*sharr al-wiqāʾa*), love of wealth (*ḥubb al-māl*) and love

of reputation (*ḥubb al-jāb*).

The traits for salvation are ten: regret (*nadm*) for sin, patience (*ṣabr*) during adversity, contentment (*ridā*) with the Divine Decree, gratitude (*shukr*) for favours, balancing between fear (*khawf*) and hope (*rajā*), abstinence (*zuhd*) in the world, sincerity (*ikhlāṣ*) in action, good character (*ḥusn al-khuluq*) with the creation, love (*ḥubb*) of Allāh and humility (*khushū*).

These are twenty features, ten of which are censured and ten of which are praiseworthy. When you have done away with one of the censured traits cross it out in your notepad, abandon thinking about it and thank Allāh for doing away with it, and know that this was only possible with Allāh granting success and aid. Then begin work on the remaining nine censured traits, this is what is to be done until he is able to cross lines through all of them.

With regards to the praiseworthy traits for salvation, he requires his soul to take on such characteristics. If he is able to achieve one of them he can put a tick next to it and then work on attaining the rest—this is what the [true] seeker needs to do.

As for most of the righteous then it is a must for apparent acts of disobedience to also be affirmed from them in their notepads. Such as: eating doubtful foods, unleashing their tongues in *ghībah* and *namimah*, argumentation, praising the self, excess in allying with those in rulers, transgression against enemies, compromising when it comes to commanding the good and forbidding the evil—most of those who deem themselves as being from among the righteous are not absolved from these acts of disobedience of the limbs. That which does not purify the limbs from sins cannot possibly be preoccupied with purification of the heart and soul.

Each group of people will have one type of these matters over-

come them, so they have to free themselves from them and reflect. An example is a with a pious scholar, in most cases he is not devoid of putting himself forward in regards to knowledge, seeking fame, spreading his reputation either by teaching or by admonishing. Whoever does that has made himself prone to tremendous tribulation which only the truthful (*siddiqūn*) are free from. The people of knowledge could even have jealousy among each other just as women do, and all of this is from the destructive traits within the secrets of the heart (*sirr al-qalb*) which a scholar may actually think that he is saved from when in fact due to his delusion he is entrenched in it.

Whoever can better his soul from such qualities then has to undertake solitude and seclusion, and seek out obscurity (*khumūl*) and refuse issuing edicts. The Companions used to refuse issuing *fatāwā* and they all deemed their brothers as being better suited to give *fatāwā*. With this, it is a must for the devils to entice a person and say to him: 'this is due to the extinction of knowledge', so he should say to them: 'the religion of Islām is sufficed from me, and if I were to die, Islām will not be destroyed. I however, am not sufficed from rectifying my own heart and soul.' So a scholar's reflection has to be on understanding the hidden aspects of these traits which are based in the heart.

We ask Allāh to rectify our corrupt hearts and to grant us success to what Allāh Loves from us.

Section Two:

Contemplation on Allāh's Essence is forbidden

It was mentioned prior that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Reflect on the favours of Allāh, and do not reflect on Allāh.” Thus, it is prohibited to reflect and contemplate (*tafakkur*) on Allāh's Essence (*Dhāt*) as the human mind is unable to comprehend that as it is far greater than what the hearts and minds can imagine, Allāh said:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

“There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.”

[*al-Shūrā* (42): 11]

As for reflection on Allāh's creation, then the Qur'ān exhorts to this, He said:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩﴾

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.”

[*Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 190]

And He said:

قُلْ أَنْظَرُوا مَاذَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

“Say: ‘Observe what is in the heavens and earth.’”

[*Yūnus* (10): 101]

Of Allāh's Signs is that he created man from a sperm drop, so people should reflect on their own selves² as within their creation

² Refer to Ibn ul-Qayyim's treatise *al-Durr al-maknūn fī tafsīr*. “And in yourselves. Then will you not see?” [*al-Dhāriyat* (51): 21]

are wonders which indicate the magnitude of Allāh, the Exalted. A lifetime would not be sufficient to stop and discuss them one by one, yet people are heedless to this even though Allāh has instructed them to reflect on their selves. Allāh said:

وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

“And in yourselves. Then will you not see?”

[*al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 21]

In the ‘Chapter of thankfulness (*shukr*)’ some discussion on the creation of man was mentioned.

Of Allāh’s Signs are the precious jewels which are in the mountains and the minerals such as gold, silver, *fayrawanj*³ and the likes, likewise, oil, sulphur and minerals etc.

Of His Signs are the tremendous deep oceans which cover the different regions of the earth which are parts of the great ocean which encompasses the entire earth which even with its land masses and mountains is like but a mere island in comparison to the vast ocean. And in the oceans themselves are such wonders which are far numerous than what we see than the wonders on land.

Observe at how Allāh has created pearls within shells under the water, look at how Allāh has created corals in rocks under the water, and the likes which are found in the sea. Observe at the wonder of ships and how Allāh has held them steady on the waters, traversing on the seas and guided by the winds. Amaze yourself at water itself which is a source of life for everything on earth, animals and plants. If a servant [of Allāh] needed to drink water yet was prevented from doing so, he would expend all of the treasures of the earth in order to attain it. And if he was to drink water yet was unable to urinate it

³ *Fayrawanj*: A type of precious stone, refer to *al-Mu’jam al-Wajīz*, p.486

out, he would expend all of the treasures of the earth in order to be able to urinate—so do not be heedless to these bounties and favours.

Of Allāh's Signs, is the air which is a subtle body which cannot be seen by the eye, then observe at its intensity and strength. Observe at the wonders of the atmosphere and the clouds, thunder, lightning, rain, ice, cold, shooting stars, lightning strikes and other such wonders. Look at the birds and how they fly with their wings in the air with such ease like how animals in the sea swim in the water with ease. Then observe at the heavens and its enormity and planets, the sun, the moon, the stars and planets which only Allāh Knows about. There is wisdom in its colour, structure and location.

Observe at how the night covers the day, and the day the night. Look at the sun and how it differs during summer, winter, spring and autumn.

It has been said: 'the sun is a hundred and sixty times the size of the earth, and the smallest planet in the solar system is about eight times the size of the earth',⁴ so if this is in regards to just one planet then observe at how many planets there are, and look at the universe which contains these planets. If you were to enter the home of a rich person which is decorated with gold your amazement would not cease and you would mention it to other. Yet you see this tremendous house, the universe, and the earth and its wonders, yet your heart does not pay any concern to it as you did the house of the rich person. You did not reflect on how your Creator built it, you have forgotten not only your own self but also your Lord. You have become preoccupied with your stomach and your private parts, and a similitude of your heedlessness is like an ant which comes out of its nest which is dug into a wall in a palace and discusses with the other ants the build

⁴ [TN]: Modern astronomy however has discovered, and Allāh knows best, that there are actually several planets which are smaller than the earth: Pluto, Neptune and Venus.

and structure of the ants nest yet does not mention the palace and what is in it! This is what you are like in your heedlessness, you only know about the heavens that which the ant knows about the palace.

This is an explanation of which those who reflect consider. Life is short and knowledge about some of the creation is only slightly understood.

Whenever you increase your knowledge of the wonders of the creation, your knowledge of the Majestic Creator is perfected. So deliberate on what we have mentioned here along with what we have put forth in the chapter of thankfulness (*shukr*). Whoever looks at these things in that they are Allāh's Actions and creations, will increase understanding of the Majesty of Allāh and His Magnitude. Whoever is deficient in looking at them, by being effected by some from them without their connection to the Causer, has been unfortunate (*shaqi'*) and we seek refuge in Allāh from the level of the ignorant and misguided. There is no point in reflecting on what we cannot see, such as the angels and jinn, and as a result we do not preoccupy ourselves with that to what we can actually see, and Allāh knows best.

THE TENTH FOUNDATION

On the Remembrance of Death
and the Afterlife
(*dhikr al-mawt wa-mā ba'dahu*)

Know that the one who is engrossed in the world and its delusion (*ghurūr*) has made his heart heedless and there is no room for it to reflect on death, thus he does not remember it. He hates to remember it and he flees from it. Then, it is important to know that man is one of the following: Man may be either engrossed in the world (*munhamik*), a penitent beginner or a vigilant gnostic.

As for the man engrossed, then he does not remember death whatsoever and when he does it is only to lament over his world and thus he is preoccupied with dispraising death. Such a person, his remembering of death from Allāh does not increase him except in distance.

As for the repentant then he makes much remembrance of death so that fear (*khawf*) and humility (*khashiya*) will grow from his heart, this is from complete repentance (*tamām al-tawba*). He may dislike death out of fear that he be taken before he has perfected his repentance

or rectified himself and his provisions for it. He will be excused for his dislike of death and this does not fall under the Prophet's saying (ﷺ): "Whoever hates to meet Allāh then Allāh will hate to meet him." He only fears meeting (*liqā'*) Allāh based on his shortcomings. He is like one who delays meeting a beloved due to being preoccupied in preparing for his visit so as to meet him in a pleasurable manner. Thus, this is not to be included as hating to meet Allāh, and its indication is always being prepared for Him and nothing else occupies him otherwise he would be like the one engrossed in the world.

As for the vigilant gnostic, then he mentions death always as it is an appointment to meet the Beloved (*liqā' al-Ḥabīb*). A lover never forgets the appointment to meet the Beloved, this is the case with him generally that the arrival of death for him is slow as he loves it so as to be absolved of the abode of the sinners (*dār al-āsin*) and move on to the close company of the Lord of the Worlds. As some of them have said: 'A beloved has come at time of pain.'

Therefore, the penitent man is excused for disliking death, this one is excused for loving death and wishing for it and the loftiest of them is the one who defers his affair to Allāh. He does not choose anything for himself, neither life nor death, so long as it is more beloved to his Lord. He could go from excess love to the station (*maqām*) of submission (*taslīm*) and contentment (*riḍā*), this is the goal and utmost limit. In any case, there is a reward and merit in remembering death. For even the man engrossed in the world could benefit from it by acquiring an aversion to this world, since it can spoil his pleasures and anxieties.

Section One:

The Excellence of the Remembrance of Death

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrated that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Remember often the Destroyer of Pleasures.”¹ by which he meant death.

Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) reported, “A man was once mentioned highly praised in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) asked them: “How is your companion’s remembrance of death?” They replied: “We never heard him mention death.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Then your companion is not as you suggest”²

Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) narrated, “The Prophet (ﷺ) was once asked: “Who is the most intelligent of people?” The Prophet replied (ﷺ): “Those who remember death the most are the best in their preparation for it. Such are the intelligent ones.”³

Al-Hasan al-Baṣrī said: ‘Death has exposed the world’s faults, thus the one who has any inner core is not left with any joy therein. A servant does not adhere to the remembrance of death in his heart except that the world becomes trivial in his eyes and all of what is in it becomes immaterial.’

¹ Nasā’ī, vol.4, p.4; Tirmidhī, #2409; Ibn Mājah, #4258; Ibn Hibbān, #2559; Aḥmad, #7912; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.321; al-Khaṭīb, *Tārikh Baghdād*, vol.1, p.384, vol.9, p.470; al-Qaḍā’ī, #668—the chain of transmission is ḥasan. It has also been reported from other Companions, refer to *Irwā’ ul-Ghālil*, #682.

² Al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.451:

“It was reported by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in his book *al-Mawt* from the ḥadīth of Anas with a weak chain of transmission. Also by Ibn ul-Mubārak in *al-Zuhd* and he said about it: ‘Mālik Ibn Mighwal reported to us’ and mentioned much addition in the report.’

I say: refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā’*, vol.10, p.229 as there is an additional verification of it therein.

³ Reported by Ibn Mājah, #4259; al-Būṣayrī said in *al-Zawā’id*: ‘Firwah Ibn Qays is majhūl, as is the one who narrated from him, the report is therefore bāṭil [null and void].’

Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) when he used to remember death shook like a feeble bird.

The jurists used to gather every night to remember death and the Day of Judgement, and they would cry as if they were at a funeral.

Hāmid al-Qayṣarī used to say: 'All of us were certain of death, yet we were not prepared for it. All of us were certain of Paradise, yet we had not performed any actions for it. All of us were certain of the Hellfire, yet we were not in fear of it. So why are you joyous? What are you waiting for? Death, it is the first visitor from Allāh which brings either good or evil. O brothers, travel to your Lord in a beautiful way.'

Shumayṭ Ibn 'Ajlān said: 'Whoever puts death before his very eyes will not be bothered with the constrictions and hardships of the worldly life.'

Know that death is tremendous and people are heedless about it due to their lack of contemplation on it, or they remember it with a heedless heart and for this reason the remembrance of death does not save it. The path to that is for the servant to open up his heart to the remembrance of death which is right before him. Like one who wants to travel to the edge of a dangerous desert or travel by sea, he only thinks about that. It is more beneficial for him to remember his friends and relatives who have passed before him, and remember their deaths and burials.

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'The happy man is he who draws an admonition from others.'⁴

Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'If you remember the dead,

⁴ Muslim, #2645

include yourself as being one of them.’

It is appropriate to visit cemeteries often, and when one’s soul has become attached to anything from the worldly life, he reflects immediately that he will also have to leave it so as to decrease his hope [in living forever in the worldly life].

It has been reported from ‘Abdu’llāh ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he said: Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and said: “Be in the world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer.”⁵

Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) used to say: ‘If you go to sleep do not wait for the morning, and if you awake do not wait for the evening. Take from your health something your infirmity, and from your life something for your death.’

In another ḥadīth: “The thing which I fear the most for my *ummah* is: desire and lengthy hopes. As for desire then it misguides from the truth, and as for lengthy hopes then they cause forgetting the Afterlife.”⁶

Al-Ḥasan said: “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) once asked his Companions (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*): “Would all of you not love to enter Paradise?” And they (his Companions) said: ‘Yes indeed, O Messenger of Allāh.’ Then he (ﷺ) added: “Shorten your hopes, bring your deaths before your eyes, and be rightly ashamed before Allāh

⁵ Bukhārī, #6416; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #13470; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Rawḍat ul-‘Uqalā’*, p.148; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.3, p.301. Those who reported it with another additions were Aḥmad, nos.4764, 13538; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.1, p.312; al-Qaḍā’ī, #644—and the isnād is ṣaḥīḥ.

It is also reported from Mu‘ādh, Abū’l-Dardā’ and Zayd Ibn Arqam (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*).

⁶ Al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.453:

Reported by Ibn Abi al-Dunyā in *Kitāb Qaṣr al-Amal* [The Book of Shortening Hopes] from ‘Alī, he also reported it from the ḥadīth of Jābir—both are weak.

I say: refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā’*, vol.10, p.237 as there is additional verification therein.

as He deserves.”⁷

Abū Zakarīyā al-Taymī said: ‘Once when Sulaymān Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Malik was in the Sacred Masjid, a stone with an inscription on it was brought to him. He sought someone be found who could read it and there upon it was written: ‘O son of Ādam! If you were to see the proximity of what remains of your life you would renounce your lengthy hopes and would long to increase in works, and would cut short your ambitions and your ploys. Your regret only comes when your foot slips [i.e. sin] and you are separated from your family, only then does it become clear to you that you will neither be returning to the world nor be increasing your good deeds. So act for the Day of Judgement, the day of grief and regret.’

Section Two:

The Cause of Lengthy Hopes

Know that lengthy hopes (*tūl al-amal*) have two causes, the first of which is love of the world (*ḥubb al-dunyā*), and the second of which is ignorance (*jaḥl*),

As for love of the world, when man becomes attached to it and its desires and pleasures, it becomes too heavy for his heart to leave and his heart stops thinking about death, which will separate him from the world. All who hate a thing deflect it away from themselves, and people are preoccupied with vain hopes. They always hope for that which will concur with his intent of remaining alive in the worldly life and what they need. They think of wealth, property, family, accommodation, friends and other means of life which he needs in

⁷ Al-‘Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī*, vol.4, p.454:

Reported by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *Kitāb Qaṣr al-Amal* [The Book of Shortening Hopes] from al-ḥasan in a mursal form.

I say: a mursal ḥadīth is a type of weak ḥadīth according to the investigative scholars of ḥadīth from the people of knowledge.

the world. In this manner his heart becomes attached to this notion and cannot progress beyond it, being distracted thereby from the remembrance of death. He is unable to consider its proximity, for if he deliberates on death and the need to prepare for it he will promise himself by saying: *"The days are before you, do not repent until you get older."* Then when he gets older he says *"until you become an old man."* Then when he becomes an old man says: *"after I finish building this house"* or *"when I come back from travelling."* So he does not cease in procrastination and delay. With these stages, he delays and delays, day after day, working and focusing on something else up until death overtakes him at a time which he did not anticipate, and at this juncture his sorrow lengthens. The most frequent cry of the people of Hellfire is *'shall.'* 'O woe,' they cry, 'because of *"shall."*' The root of all these hopes is love of the world, and finding comfort with it and heedlessness to the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): "Love whatever you want as you will soon leave it."

As for the matter of ignorance, then this is when a man relies on his youth and distances from himself the proximity of death. This poor person does not reflect on the fact that the old men of his land only number in their tens. Death among youth is more prevalent and for every old man that dies a thousand children and young men pass away. A young man could be deceived by his good health, he does not know that death could overcome him suddenly even though he tries to distance its reality from himself. Illness comes suddenly, and if he falls seriously ill death is not too far from him. If he was to reflect and know that death does not have a specific time, summer and winter, spring and autumn, night and day. Neither is he restricted to a specific age, both young and old die.

Section Three:

People's Diverse ranks in Lengthy Hopes

People greatly fluctuate in their lengthy hopes. Some who hope to survive until old age; others have endless hopes and whilst others have deficient hopes. It was reported from Abū 'Uthmān al-Nahdī that he said: 'I reached one hundred and thirty years of age and there is nothing except that I knew within it was deficiency except for my hopes.'

It has been reported in regards to deficient hopes that the wife of Ḥabīb Abū Muḥammad⁸ said: 'Abū Muḥammad used to say to me: 'If I die today send me to so and so to wash my body and do so and so.' It was said to her: 'Have you seen a vision?' She replied: 'This is what he used to say every day.'

Ibrāhīm Ibn Sibṭ who said: Abū Zur'ah said: 'I will say to you a word which I have not said to anyone else: I have not left the *masjid* for twenty years except that my soul encouraged me to return to it.' Some of them said: 'Do you not wash your shirt?' He replied: 'The matter [death] is more urgent than that.'

Muḥammad Ibn Abī Tawba said: 'Ma'rūf got up to pray and said to me: 'Step forwards to lead.' I said: 'If I lead this Prayer for you I will never lead you in one again.' And Ma'rūf said: 'And you tell yourself that you shall pray again! We seek refuge with Allāh from lengthy hopes, for it prevents the best of actions.'

These are the states of the ascetics (*ṣūbhād*) in regards to having short hopes, whenever hopes are shortened, actions are perfected. As it is possible that one will die today, get prepared like one who is

⁸ See Abū Nu'aym, *Ḥilyat ul-'Awliyā'*, vol.6, p.149

preparing to die. If you go to sleep thank Allāh for safety as Allāh is Ever-Able to cause you to die tonight, so be eager to do good actions.

The Divine Legislation relays much in exhortation of keenness to perform good actions as found in Bukhārī from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) who said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Two favours which with many people lose: good health and free time.”

Also from him: ‘That Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said to a man while admonishing him: “Make use of five before five: your youth before your old age; your good health before your illness; your richness before your poverty; your free time before your preoccupation and your life before your death.”’⁹

‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘Leisureliness is good in all things, except in that related to the Afterlife.’

Al-Hasan used to say: ‘Amazing are a people who have been instructed to take provisions, invited to take a journey [to the Afterlife], their first of them have been detained, while they are sitting in jest.’

Suhaym, the client of Banī Tamīm said: ‘I sat with ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn ‘Abdu’llāh and he finished his prayer and then approached me and said: ‘Inform me of your need as I am eager for something.’ I said to him: ‘And what are you eager for?’ He replied: ‘The angel of death.’ He used to prayer a thousand units [of prayer] per day.’

They used to be eager to do good actions to the utmost, Ibn ‘Umar used to get up at night, make ablution and pray. Then he would sleep a little like a bird, then get up again, make ablution and pray. Then he

⁹ Reported by Ḥākim, vol.4, p.306; Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, *Kitāb Qaṣr al-Amal*, vol.2, p.1, no.2—with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād as our Shaykh concluded in the *takebrīj* [critical edit] of *Iqtidā’*

would sleep a little, then get up, make ablution and pray. He would do this regularly. ‘Umayr Ibn Hānī used to make one hundred thousand *tasbiḥāt*.¹⁰ Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Ayyāsh said: “I have completed the Qur’ān in this corner eighteen thousand times.”

Section Four:

Agonies of Death and the states preferable upon its advent

Know that if man had no other distress or anguish before him except for death it would be sufficient to disturb his livelihood, bring anxiety to his happiness and to lengthen his reflection. What is strange about man is that when he is immersed in the most delightful of things and waited for a soldier to come and hit him five times, he would be anxious about his living and his delights. Yet at the same time he is open to be set upon by the angel of death with the pangs of expunging his soul, yet he is heedless of remembering that, this is due to ignorance (*jahl*) and delusion (*ghurur*).

Know that death is more intense than being hit with a sword, the one being hit will scream out and seek the survival of his sustenance. As for the dead person, at the time of death, his voice will be severed due to the intensity of his pain as the distress will be to the utmost with him and has overcome his heart and entire body, weakening his limbs. He thus has no power remaining left. He wants to cry out and seek help, but his soul will be ripped from his body. Every limb of his body will die slowly, first his feet will become cold, then his shins, then his thighs, until it reaches the throat. When that happens his

ul-‘Ilm, #170.

¹⁰ This immense number of *tasbiḥāt* has not at all been relayed in the Sunnah, neither in the authentic Sunnah nor in the weak narrations reported in the books of the Sunnah! The best guidance is that of Muḥammad (ﷺ)!

looking at the worldly life and his family is severed and the door to *tawba* is closed. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Allāh accepts the *tawba* of the servant as long as the pangs of death have not reached him."¹¹

It has also been reported that the angels entrusted with overseeing the person at the time of death that if the person was righteous they praise him and say: "May Allāh increase you in goodness!" Yet if the person was evil they say: "May Allāh not increase you in goodness."¹²

Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, appoints to each of his believing servants two angels who record his actions. If he dies they say: "He has died, do you permit us to take him up to the heavens?" Allāh Will Say: "My heavens are filled with angels who glorify Me." The angels will say: "Do you permit us to place him in the earth?" Allāh Will Say: "My earth is full with those who glorify Me." The angels will ask: "So where shall we place him?" Allāh Will Say: "go to the grave of my servant and glorify Me, praise Me, and exalt Me and record that for My servant until the Day of Judgement."¹³

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the ḥadīth of 'Ubādah Ibn al-Ṣāmit (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ): "When death comes to a believer he is given glad tidings of Allāh's Pleasure and Honour and there is nothing more beloved to him than what is in front of him. As for the person of the Hellfire, if his life is sealed with evil he is given glad tidings of it and of whatever is in such states."

Many of the Salaf feared an evil end (*sū' al-akhbātima*) and we men-

¹¹ Aḥmad, #6160, 6408; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.257; Abū Nu'aym, vol.5, p.19; Ibn Mājah, #4253; Ibn Ḥibbān, #2449—from Ibn 'Umar with a isnād which is ḥasan.

¹² Ibn Abī al-Dunyā from Wuhayb Ibn al-Warad—it is weak.

¹³ Ibn 'Adiyy, *al-Kāmil*, vol.7, p.2561—in the chain of transmission is Haytham Ibn Jamāz and he is munkar ul-ḥadīth, and some deemed him as a liar.

tioned that in ‘the Chapter of Fear’ and it is related to this topic. We ask Allāh to have mercy with us with His Mercy Which Encompasses everything and to be Subtle with us and seal for us good, indeed He is Most Generous, Most Kind.

As for the things which are recommended when death approaches is for his heart to have good opinion of Allāh, for his tongue to say the testimony (*shahāda*), be tranquil as a sign of subtlety (*luṭuf*), and it is an indication that he has seen good, and it has been reported that the soul of a believer leaves calmly.¹⁴

It is recommended to encourage the one dying to say “*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*” as has been mentioned in the ḥadīth in Muslim: “Encourage your dying to say *lā ilaha ilā Allāh*.”

The person encouraging has to be gentle, it is mentioned in another ḥadīth: “Be present with your dying and encourage them to say ‘*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*’ and give them glad tidings of the Paradise. *Shayṭān*, the enemy of Allāh, is as close as he can be to the servant at this instance.”¹⁵

In an authentic ḥadīth: “None of you should die except with good suspicion of Allāh.”¹⁶

It was reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) visited a man who was dying and said to him: “How do you yourself now?” The man said: “I hope [good from] Allāh and I fear due to my sins.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The two are not combined in the heart of a believer at this

¹⁴ Abū Nu‘aym, vol.5, p.59; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabir*, #10015, 10049; al-Haythamī, *al-Majma‘*, vol.2, p.326 and al-Haythamī said: “It contains al-Qāsim Ibn Muṭayyib and he is weak.”

¹⁵ Abū Nu‘aym, vol.5, p.186 from Wāthilah, the chain of transmission is weak.

¹⁶ Muslim, #2877; Abū Dāwūd, #3097; Ibn Mājah, #4167; Ibn Sa’d, vol.2, p.255; Ibn ul-Munbārak, #1034; Aḥmad, vol.3, pp.293, 315, 325, 330, 344, 390; al-Qaḍā’ī, #938—from Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

instance except that Allāh Gives him what he hopes for and protects him from what he fears.”¹⁷

Hope at death is better as fear is for actions which have passed before, at death the eye stops to reflect so has to be dealt with gently. *Shayṭān* also at that point will try to get the servant [of Allāh] to think bad of Allāh about what passed before and get him to fear, thus good suspicion of Allāh is the best weapon against the enemy.

Sulymān al-Taymī said to his son when he was on his death bed: ‘O my son, tell me about the concessions so that perhaps I will meet Allāh while having good suspicion of Him.’

Section Five:

The Death of the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)

Know that with Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) is the best example for all circumstances, and it is well known that there is no one from among the creation who is more beloved to Allāh than him (ﷺ).

Yet with that, Allāh did not delay his appointed time when he fulfilled his life. The Prophet (ﷺ) met death with agony, Bukhārī reported in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*¹⁸ from the ḥadīth of ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) that she said: “There was a leather or wooden container filled with water in front of Allāh’s Messenger when he was on his deathbed. He would dip his hand into the water and wipe his face with it saying: “*lā ilāha ilā Allāh*, indeed unto death are agonies.”

In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*¹⁹ from the ḥadīth of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*)

¹⁷ Tirmidhī, #983; Ibn Mājah, #4261; Nasā’ī, *al-Kubrā* as relayed in *Tuhfat ul-Ashraf*, vol.1, p.104—from Anas and the isnād is ḥasan.

¹⁸ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.106; Muslim, #418

¹⁹ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.113; Aḥmad, vol.3, p.197; al-Dārimī, vol.1, p.40; Ibn Mājah, #1629

that he said: “When the Prophet’s sickness worsened (ﷺ) he would fall unconscious. Fāṭimah (*radi Allāhu ‘anhā*) said: ‘How distressed my father it.’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said to her: “There will be no distress after this day.””

Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) reported: ‘We gathered in the house of our mother ‘Ā’ishah (*radiy Allāhu ‘anhā*) and Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) looked at us and we shed tears. He looked at us (ﷺ) and tears welled up in his eyes. Then he said: “Welcome to you! May Allāh greet you with peace! May Allāh preserve you! May Allāh aid you! May Allāh unite you! May Allāh support you! May Allāh grant you success! May Allāh bring benefit with you! May Allāh raise you! May Allāh keep you safe! I exhort you to have fear of Allāh, I advise you by Allāh. I keep you in the trust of Allāh.” We said: “O Messenger of Allāh, when is your appointed time [death]?” He replied: “It is coming soon, for me to go to Allāh and to the *Sidrat ul-Muntabā* [Highest End of Paradise], the Eternal Garden, the *Firdaws al-‘Alā*.” We said: “O Messenger of Allāh, what shall we shroud you with?” He said: “In this thobe which I am wearing now if you want, or in a Yemeni garment, or in white.” We said: “O Messenger of Allāh, who should lead the funeral prayer?” Then we began to cry. He said: “Go easy, may Allāh have mercy on you, may Allāh increase you in goodness for your Prophet. If you have washed and shrouded me, then place me on my bed here which will be my grave. Then leave for an hour, as the first to pray over me will be my close friend and beloved, Jibrīl, then Mikā’īl, then Isrāfil, then the angel of death, then many other angels. Then come back in groups, pray over me and convey *salāms*. Do not harm me by praising me, crying or shouting. A man from my household should pray over me first, then their women, and then you after them. Convey the salutations to whoever is absent from my companions and upon those who follow my deen up until the Last Day. For I testify to you that I have conveyed the salutations of

salām to whoever enters into Islām.”²⁰

Jibrīl visited the Prophet (ﷺ) three days before his death and said to him: “O Muḥammad, Allāh has sent me to you to ask you about that which He is more knowledgeable than you regarding. How do you find yourself?” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Jibrīl, I feel worried and distressed.” Then two days before his death Jibrīl visited him again and asked him the same question, the Prophet (ﷺ) replied with the same answer. Then Jibrīl visited him again a day before his death and asked him the same question, the Prophet (ﷺ) replied with the same answer.

Then the angel of death sought permission [from Jibrīl to take the Prophet’s soul, (ﷺ)] and Jibrīl said: “O Aḥmad, this is the angel of death asking permission to take your soul and he has not sought permission from any human before you, and will not seek permission from any human after you.” The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Grant him permission.” The angel of death entered and stood in front of the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: “Allāh has sent me unto you and instructed me to obey you. So if you instruct me to take your soul I will do, and if not then I will refrain.”

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Would you do that O angel of death?” The angel of death said: “Likewise, I have been instructed to obey you.” Jibrīl said: “O Aḥmad, Allāh misses you and longs for you.” Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Take my soul O angel of death.” Jibrīl (*alayhis-salām*) said: “O Messenger of Allāh, this is my last visit to earth and you are my only need to come to the world.”²¹

²⁰ Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt*; Ṭabarānī, *al-Du’ā’*; *al-Wāḥidī*, *al-Tafsīr*—the isnād is very weak, refer to *Sharḥ ul-Iḥyā’*, vol.10, p.290

²¹ Reported by Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #2890 from al-Ḥusayn Ibn ‘Alī (*radīy>Allāhu ‘anhumā*); relayed by al-Haythamī in *al-Majma’*, vol.9, p.35 and he said: ‘It contains ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn Maymūn al-Qadāh and his ḥadīth are not taken [*dhababa al-ḥadīth*].’

Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) died while leaning on 'Ā'ishah's chest (*radiy Allāhu 'anhā*) and wearing a harsh woollen garment and a thick Izār. Fāṭimah (*radiy Allāhu 'anhā*): "O father, who has responded to the call of the Lord Who has invited him? O father, whose dwelling place is *al-Firdaws* [the Garden of Paradise], O father, unto Jibrīl we convey the news [of your death], O father, When the Prophet was buried, Fāṭimah said to Anas: "O Anas, are you content with yourself to throw dust over Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)?"²²

Section Six:

The Death of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq (*radiy Allāhu 'anhū*)

Abū'l-Maliḥ reported that Abū Bakr (*radiy Allāhu 'anhū*) when he was on his deathbed sent for 'Umar (*radiy Allāhu 'anhū*) and said to him: 'I advise you with something: Allāh has a right on you at night which He does not accept except at night, and He has a right during the daylight which He does not accept except at day. He does not accept a voluntary act until an obligatory act has been performed, and the scales on the Day of Judgement will be weighty due to following the truth in the worldly life. It is the right of the scales in which the truth will be weighed to be weighty, and the scales are only light due to following falsehood in the worldly life. It is the right of the scales in which falsehood will be weighed to be light.

Do you not see that Allāh revealed the verses of hope with those of severity, and the verses of severity with those of hope so that the servant will be both in fear and in hope, not throwing himself into destruction with his own hands? Do not anticipate anything from Allāh except the truth. If you maintain this advice from me, and let death be the most beloved thing unto you, as it is sure to happen to you. If you do not pay heed to my advice then death is not the most

²² The end part of the ḥadīth from Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī mentioned prior.

beloved thing unto you.

And it was said that when Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) was approaching death, his daughter ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) said:

By your life, wealth will not be enough for a youth
When the pangs of death construct the chest

Abū Bakr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said to her: “Do not say this, rather say [what Allāh says]:

وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيدُ ﴿١٩﴾

“And the agony of death has come in truth. This is what you used to shun!”

[*Qāf* (50): 19]

Look at my two thobes, wash them and shroud me in them, as the living are in more need of the new than the dead.’

Section Seven:

The Death of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)

Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: “Umar was in my house after he was stabbed and he fell ill which led to his death. He said to me: ‘Put my cheek on the ground.’ I said: ‘You should not do that.’ He rested his head on my thigh and I said: ‘Shall I rest you on my lap or on the ground?’ I thought that it would harm him so I did not do it. He said: ‘Place my cheek on the ground here. Woe to me, my mother’s woe if my Lord does not have mercy on me.’

It was reported that when he was stabbed, he was carried to his home and the people came to visit him and praise him. A young man came and said: ‘Glad tidings O leader of the believers, you have glad

tidings from Allāh. For you accompanied Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ), and you have put forth for Islām that which you know, then you assumed authority and were just, and then you have attained martyrdom!' Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) replied: 'I regarded that as being little, neither for me nor against me.' Then he said: 'O 'Abdu'llāh Ibn 'Umar, go to 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*), the mother of the believers and tell her that 'Umar conveys *salāms* unto you and do not say "*the leader of the believers*" as this day I am not unto the believers a leader. Tell her that 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb seeks your permission for him to be buried next to his companion [i.e. the Prophet (ﷺ)].' Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) went, conveyed the *salām* and sought her permission. He went to her home and found her sitting and weeping. Then Ibn 'Umar said: "Umar conveys his *salām* unto you and he seeks permission to be buried next to his companion." 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) said: 'I did want that place for myself, but this day I prefer him to have over than my own self.' When ibn 'Umar returned, 'Umar asked him: 'What happened?' Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'What you love O leader of the believers, she has granted permission.' 'Umar said: 'All praise is due to Allāh, nothing was more beloved to me than that. When I die, carry my body [to the home of 'Ā'ishah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*)], give greetings of peace and say: "Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb seeks permission". If she grants permission for me then enter me, and if she refuses then return me to be buried in the graves of the Muslims.'

Muslim²³ also solely reported in the ḥadīth of al-Miswar Ibn Makhramah: 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'By Allāh, if I had the earth in gold I would spend all of it so as to saved from Allāh's punishment before I see him.'

In another report: 'By Allāh, if I had that over which the sun rises and sets, I would spend all out of fear of the Creator.'

²³ Rather Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol.7, p.42. I did not see it in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*!

Section Eight:

The Death of ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān
(*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)

Nā’ilah bint al-Farāfiṣah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anḥā*), one of the wives of ‘Uthmān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that she said: “Uthmān fasted the day before he was killed. When it came time to break his fast he asked for fresh water but they did not bring it for him so he went to sleep without breaking his fast. When he awoke some servant women bought jars filled with fresh water. I asked them for some water and they gave me a cup. I then went to ‘Uthmān and woke him and said: ‘Here is some fresh water.’ He raised his head, saw that it was *fajr* and said: ‘I have awoken fasting and Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) has visited me tonight and given me fresh water saying: ‘Drink ‘Uthmān’ and I drank until I quenched my thirst. Then he said: ‘Have some more?’ So I drank until I quenched my thirst. Then he said: ‘Indeed, the people will rebel against you. If you fight them you will be victorious, and if you leave them then you will break your fast with us.’ She said: ‘Then they entered his house and killed him.’

Al-‘Alā’ Ibn al-Fuḍayl from his father who said: ‘When ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) was killed they searched his shelves and found a locked chest. They opened it and found a small vessel in it with a piece of paper inside it with something written on it. It said: “This is ‘Uthmān’s Bequest: In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful, indeed the Paradise is truth, the Hellfire is truth and Allāh will resurrect those in the graves on the day about which there is no doubt, Allāh does not break His Promise. On it we live, die and will be resurrected *insha’Allāh*.’

Section Nine:

The Death of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib
(*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhū*)

Al-Sha'bī said: 'When 'Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhū*) was struck with that blow he said: 'What was done with the one who hit me?' They said: 'We got him.' 'Alī said: 'feed him from my food, give him my water to drink. If I live I will look at his affair, and if I die then strike him with one strike and no more.' Then 'Alī asked al-Ḥasan to wash him and said: 'Do not go to excess in the shroud, for I heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say: "Do not go to excess in the shrouding as they wear out quickly."²⁴

Walk with me [in the funeral procession] and do not walk either speedily or slowly. If it is good you will hasten it for me, and if it is bad then you will be relieved from me.'

It is reported that on the night in which 'Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhū*) died, Ibn ul-Tayyāḥ came to him at *fajr* and called the *adhān* for *ṣalāh* while 'Alī was lying on the bed. He told him that *fajr* had commenced, but he remained lying down. Then he told him a third time, then he got up, walked and said:

Make your chest firm for death.
As death is going to meet you.²⁵
Do not be scared of death
When it comes to your valley.

²⁴ Abū Dāwūd, #3154 and in the chain is Abū Mālik al-Janbī and he is weak in ḥadīth.

²⁵ This couplet is al-Hazaj-Makhzūm as testified to by the experts in prosody, refer to Ibn ul-Mabrad, *al-Kāmil*, #923 and *Lisān ul-'Arab al-Mubīṭ*, vol.1, p.1285, #105. Ibn Manẓūr stated: "These words are a *kināyah* [ambiguous implication] for getting prepared for something."

I say: refer to *Asās ul-Balāgha*, p.125 and *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd*, vol.3, p.32

Section Ten:
On Sayings of those Near Death among the
Companions

When death approached al-Ḥasan Ibn 'Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhumā*) he said: 'Take my bed out of the house and then leave.' Then he said: 'O Allāh I trust myself with You.'

We mentioned prior the words of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (*raḍi Allāhu 'anhum*).

It was reported that Mu'ādh Ibn Jabal (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) said when death approached him: 'Look if morning has come upon us yet.' He came and it was said to him that morning had not yet broken. Later he was told when morning had broken and he said: 'I seek refuge in Allāh from a night whose morning leads to the Hellfire.' Then he said: 'Welcome to death! The absent visitor, the beloved who has arrived. O Allāh if I feared You then today I hope in You. O Allāh You Know that I did not love the world or to remain in it for long. I used to fast on the very hot days, pray on winter nights and gather with scholars in the circles of remembrance.'

Abū Muslim said: 'I went to see Abū'l-Dardā' (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) while he was admonishing himself saying: 'What would a man do on this hour? What would he do on such a day?' Then he died, may Allāh have mercy on him.'

Salmān al-Fārisī (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) drew near to his death he wept he was asked: 'What has made you weep?' He replied: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) instructed us to prepare with the provisions of a traveller,'²⁶

²⁶ Aḥmad, vol.5, p.438; Ibn Mājah, #4104; Ṭabarānī, *al-Kabīr*, #6160, 6069, 9182; Ḥākim, vol.4, p.317; 'Abdu'l-Razzāq, #20632; Abū Nu'aym, vol.1, pp.195, 196, 197, vol.2, p.237; Aḥmad, *al-Zuhd*, p.28; al-Qaḍā'ī, #728—it is ṣaḥīḥ.

yet with me are these provisions.’ It was said: all that he had around him value amounted to little more than ten dirhams.

Al-Muzanī reported that:²⁷ ‘I went to see Muḥammad Ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī at the time of his death²⁸ and I said to him: ‘How are you O Abū ‘Abdu’llāh?’ He replied: ‘I have become one who is departing from this world, leaving my brothers, seeking Allāh, meeting with by bad actions, so I do not know whether my soul is going to Paradise or to the Fire.’” Then ash-Shāfi‘ī recited some poetry,

When my heart became hard and my thoughts constricted,
I had hope in Your Pardon as a form of safety,
My sins are enormous,
yet when I compared it to Your Pardon,
Your Pardon was Greater,
You never cease to be a Possessor of Pardon,
and You still show good and pardon which is a favour and an honour²⁹

Section Eleven: Visiting the Graveyard

It was said that: Abū’l-Dardā’ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) used to sit at the graves and he was asked as to why he did that. He replied: ‘I sit with a people who remind me of my true abode, and if I am absent they will not backbite me.’

Maymūn Ibn Mihrān said: ‘I went with ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz to the cemetery and when he looked at the graves he would cry. Then he approached me and said: ‘O Maymūn, these are the graves of my forefathers from Banu Umayyah, yet it is as if they were never even a part of the world sharing in their delights and pleasures. Do you

²⁷ [TN]: Al-Bayhaqī, *Manāqib ul-Shāfi‘ī*, vol.2, pp.294-95 via Abū ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn Shākir from al-Muzanī.

²⁸ [TN]: Al-Shāfi‘ī died in 204 AH and al-Muzanī was twenty-nine years old at that time.

²⁹ Refer to *Diwān al-Shāfi‘ī*, pp.120, 121; al-Bayhaqī, *Manāqib ul-Shāfi‘ī*, vol.2, p.111

not see how they fell prey to calamity and punishment? And how they were afflicted? Their bodies have now decayed.' Then he cried and said: 'By Allāh I do not know of anyone who have received more favour than those who went on to the graves and was assured from Allāh's punishment.'

It is recommended to visit the graves (*ziyārat al-qubūr*), for the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Visit the graves as they will remind you of the Afterlife."³⁰

Whoever visits the graves will meet the face of the dead, recite something from the Qur'ān as a gift for him³¹ and the visit should be on Friday.³²

It was reported that when 'Āsim al-Jahdarī died, a man from his people saw him in a dream two years after he died and he said to him: 'Did you not die?' 'Āsim replied: 'Yes of course.' The man said: 'Where are you then?' 'Āsim replied: 'By Allāh, I am in a Rawd from the gardens of Paradise, along with some people from my companions. We meet every night of *jumu'ah* in the company of Abū Bakr Ibn 'Abdu'llāh al-Muzanī and we get you news.' The man said: 'I said to him: 'By your bodies or your souls?' 'Āsim said: 'How far [is that from being the case]! For our bodies have rotted away, our souls meet.' The man said: 'do you know when we will visit you?' 'Āsim said: 'We know this every Friday evening up until dawn on Saturday.'

³⁰ Muslim, #1977; Abū Dāwūd, vol.2, p.72; al-Bayhaqī, vol.4, p.77; Nasā'ī, vol.1, p.285; Aḥmad, vol.5, pp.350, 355, 361—from Buraydah.

³¹ There is difference of opinion among the people of knowledge on this issue, refer to Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Salām al-Shuqayrī, *Ḥukm ul-Qira'at li'l-Amwāt*. Also refer to al-Shawkānī, *Nayl ul-Awtār*, vol.4, p.79. as for reciting the Qur'ān at a grave then Abū Dāwūd stated in his *Masā'il*, p.158: 'I heard Aḥmad (*raḥimahullāh*) being asked about reciting the Qur'ān at graves and he said: "no."

³² There are some reports which have been relayed regarding the virtue of this, as found in Ibn ul-Qayyim, *al-Rūb*, with the edit of the brother, Shaykh 'Abdu'l-Fattāh 'Umar—yet they are weak and uncorroborated. Refer to Ibn ul-Hāj al-Mālikī, *al-Madkhal*, vol.3, p.277

The man said: 'Why on these days?' 'Āsim said: 'Due to the nobility and magnitude of the day of *jumu'ah*.'³³

'Uthmān Ibn Sawād al-Ṭufāwī relayed, and his mother was of the pious worshipping women named Rāhibah. He said: 'When my mother was on her deathbed she looked up to the heavens and said: 'O my support, upon whom will I depend in life after my death, do not disgrace me at death or worry me in the grave.' He said: 'Then she died. I used to go to her grave every *jumu'ah* and make *du'a'* for her and ask Allāh to forgive her and the people in the graves. One night I saw her in a dream and I said to her: 'O my mother, how are you?' She said: 'O my son, death is a severe torment. All praise is due to Allāh, I am in the praiseworthy *barzakh*, awaiting *al-rayḥān* and *al-sundus*, until the Day of Gathering.'

I said: 'Do you have any needs?' She said: 'Yes, do not give up visiting us as I am happy with you arrival on *jumu'ah*, and when you arrive it is said to me: 'Rāhibah, here is your son from before', so I am so happy with that as are the people around me who are dead in their graves.'

Anas Ibn Maṣṣūr said: 'A man was late for a *janāzah* but was able to catch the prayer. At night, he stood at the gate of the cemetery and said: 'May Allāh sooth your loneliness, show mercy to you, overlook your sins, accept your good deeds.' He never said any more than these words. He said: 'I got up at night one night, but I did not go to the cemetery, I supplicated as I did usually and then I fell sleep and I was with many people who had come to me. I said: 'who are you and what do you want?' They said: 'we are the people of the graves and you used to give us gifts.' I said: 'What gifts?' They said: 'the supplications you used to make.' Then I did not give up from making supplication at that cemetery ever again.

³³ Refer to one of my previous comments [on the likes of such reports]!!

Bashhār Ibn Ghālib said: 'I saw Rābi'ah in a dream and I used to make a lot of supplication for her. She said to me: 'O Bashhār! Your gifts reached me on plates of light covered with silk cloths.' I said: 'How is that?' She replied: 'This is how the *du'ā*' of the living is for the dead. They are brought to the receivers on plates of light covered with silk cloths and it is said: this is a gift for you.'

Section Twelve:

On the True Nature of Death

The verses and reports indicate that the reality of death, the soul leaving the body while the soul remains, either punished or favoured. The soul could be pained by itself due to grief (*ḥuẓn*) or worry (*ghamm*), or it could be favoured with types of joy (*farḥ*) and happiness (*surūr*) without the bodily organs having any connection to this.³⁴

Whatever is a description of the soul (*ruh*) itself remains with it after the body has been separated from it, and all which it has via the bodily organs becomes void when the body dies until the soul returns to the body. It is neither far off to accept that the soul returns to its body while in the grave, nor is it to accept that the soul is delayed from returning to its body on the Day of Resurrection.³⁵ Allāh, Glory unto Him, has more knowledge as to what happens to His servants.

The meaning of death is: the severance of the spirit's behaviour from the body, removal of the body from its working function, man losing his wealth, property and family due to being taken to another world which is unlike this one. If there is anything in the world which pleased and comforted him, his anguish will be greater after death.

³⁴ According to the *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*, the punishment of the grave, and its blessings, happen on both the body and soul together. For a discussion on this in detail refer to *Sharḥ ul-'Aqīdah al-Taḥāwīyyah*, p.447.

³⁵ See al-Safārīnī, *Lawāmi' ul-Anwār al-Bahīyyah*, vol.2, pp.26-28

Yet if nothing pleased him except for the remembrance of Allāh (*dhikr*) and intimacy (*uns*), then his favours will be great and his happiness perfected when he is removed from his beloved things and the burdens and preoccupations are severed, all of which preoccupied him from remembering Allāh.

Death uncovers to the dead that which was not exposed to him while he was alive, as things become exposed to a person while awake that which were not exposed to him while he was asleep. People are asleep and when they die they are attentive.³⁶

The first that will be uncovered to him is what harmed him and what benefitted him of good deeds and bad. This was recorded in the secrets of his heart yet he was preoccupied from inspecting it due to his preoccupation in the world. So when this is severed, all of his actions become exposed, he does not look at a bad deed except that he regrets and anguishes so much so that he will want to enter hell so as to be free of the anguish, all of this will be uncovered at death. These pains are experienced by the disobedient when they are buried, we ask Allāh for salvation.

What indicates that the soul does not cease after death is when Allāh says,

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ
فُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

“And consider not those that were slain in the way of Allāh to be dead. Rather they are alive, nourished in the presence of their Lord, all rejoicing”

[*Al-Imrān* (3): 169]

³⁶ This expression is ascribed to the Prophet (ﷺ) by some, like the author of *al-Ihya'*, yet it has no basis whatsoever as al-'Irāqī said in *al-Mughni*, as did al-Subkī in *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol.4, p.170; al-'Ajlūnī, *Kashf al-Khifā'*, vol.2, p.312.

Maṣrūq said: ‘We asked ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) about this verse and he said: ‘Their souls will be in the souls of green birds in chandeliers hanging from the throne of Allāh. They enjoy as they wish and then go back to their chandeliers.’”

And He said,

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ
أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٦٦﴾

“The Fire, they are exposed to it morning and evening. And the Day the Hour appears [it will be said], ‘Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest punishment.’”

[*Ghāfir* (40): 46]

Allāh informed that they will be punished after death.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs³⁷ from Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “When one of you dies, he is shown his seat in the morning and evening. If he is from the people of Paradise, he is shown a seat from the people of Paradise; and if he is from the people of the Hellfire, he is shown one of their seats. It will be said to him: ‘This is your seat until Allāh resurrects you on the Day of Judgement.’”

It was mentioned prior that when a person’s evil deeds are uncovered he will be in anguish and great pain. As for the believer, then ‘Abdu’llāh Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘When the soul leaves a believer he is like a man who was imprisoned and then freed, he then embarks throughout the earth safe and sound. After death the believer uncovers Allāh’s virtue and honour to which the worldly life is but a prison and he is like one who is imprisoned in a dark room and then a vast garden is opened up to him, full of trees and he does

³⁷ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.193; Muslim, #2866; Mālik, vol.1, p.239; Tirmidhī, #1072; and Nasā’ī, vol.4, p.107.

not like to return to the worldly life much like how he does not like to return to his mother's womb.'

Mujāhid said: "The believer is given glad tidings of his son's righteousness later so as to cool his eyes.'

Section Thirteen:

Exposition on the Grave

It has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "The grave is a garden from the gardens of Paradise, or a pit from the pits of Hell."³⁸

It has also been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "The grave says to the dead when he is placed therein: 'Woe to you O son of ādam! What has deluded you so? Did you not know that I am an abode of darkness, an abode of solitude, an abode of worms?'"³⁹

Tirmidhī reported from Abū Sa'īd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) entered his *musalla* and saw the people gathering as if they were many. He said (ﷺ): "If you were gathered like this so as to remember the destroyer of delights you would be too busy from what I see from you now. Make plentiful your remembrance of the destroyer of delights (death). For there is no day except the grave speaks and says: 'I am the abode of strangeness, I am the abode of solitude, I am the abode of dust I am the abode of worms.' When the believing servant [of Allāh] is buried the grave will say to him: 'welcome to you, with pleasure'. As you were of the most beloved to

³⁸ Tirmidhī, #2462—from Abū Sa'īd and also relayed by al-Sakhāwī in *al-Maqāṣid*, #758 who further ascribed it to Ṭabarānī who relayed it from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) and then said: "the chain is weak."

³⁹ Al-'Irāqī said in *al-Mughnī* vol.4, p.498:

Reported by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *Kitāb ul-Qubūr* [The Book of Graves]; Ṭabarānī in *Musnad al-Shāmiyīn* and Abū Aḥmad Ḥākim in *al-Kunā* from the ḥadīth of Abū'l-Ḥajjāj al-Thimālī with a weak chain.

traverse on my back today you have become unto me. You will see what I have for you, and it will become extended as far as his eye can see and a door to Paradise will be opened. If a sinner or disbeliever is buried the grave will say to him: 'No welcome and no greetings. As you were of the most detested to traverse on my back today you have become unto me. You will see what I have prepared for you.' Then it will constrict him to the extent that his ribs break."

Ka'b said: 'When a righteous man is placed into his grave, his righteous actions gather around him: the prayer, fasting, *ḥajj*, *jihād* and charity. The angels of torment reach for his legs and his prayer will say: 'Leave him, you have no way to him. For he stood with me for long periods standing for Allāh.' Then the angels torment will reach for his body and his *ḥajj* and *jihād* will say: 'leave him, for he strived with himself and tired his body. He made pilgrimage and *jihād* for Allāh. You have no way to him.' Then they will go for his hands and his charity will speak saying: 'How much charity left these two [hands], until he placed them into Allāh's Hand seeking Allāh's Face. You have no way to him.' Then it will be said to the man: 'Are you content with life and death?' Then the angels of mercy will go to him and lay down a bed with covers from Paradise. His grave will become as vast as he can see, illuminated by a candle from Paradise from his light up until Allāh Resurrects him from the grave.'

Anas Ibn Mālik (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "When a servant [of Allāh] is paced into his grave, his companions turn away from him and he hears their footsteps. Then two angels will go to him and sit him up, then they will say to him: 'What did you used to say about this man Muḥammad (ﷺ)?' As for the believer he will say "I testify that he is the servant and messenger of Allāh." The angels will say: 'look at your place in the Hellfire! However, Allāh has given you a place in Paradise instead of it.'" The

Prophet (ﷺ) then said: "He will see both places. As for the sinful or the hypocrite when it is said to him: 'What did you used to say about this man?' They will reply: 'I did not comprehend what I was saying, I just used to say what the people said.' The angels will say to him: 'Neither did you comprehend nor did you recite [the Qur'ān].' Then he will be beaten with an iron hammer between his ears and he will cry out so loudly that he will be heard whatever is near him except human and Jinn." Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁴⁰

Also within the Two Ṣaḥīḥs is the ḥadīth of Asmā' bint Abī Bakr (*radīy Allāhu 'anhā*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "It has been revealed to me that you will be tested in your graves similar to, or like, the test of the Dajjāl. It will be said therein: 'What do you know of this man [i.e. Muḥammad, (ﷺ)]?' As for the believer then he will say: 'I testify that he is the servant and messenger of Allāh.'"

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhuma*) said: When the *janāza* procession of Sa'd Ibn Mu'ād (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) came out we followed it. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) turned to us and said: "There is no person except that he will have constriction in the grave, and if anyone would be absolved of this it would be Sa'd Ibn Mu'ādh."

'Abdu'llāh al-Ṣin'ānī said: 'I saw Yazīd Ibn Hārūn in a dream four nights after he died. I said to him: 'What did Allāh do with you?' He replied: 'He accepted my good actions and overlooked me for my bad actions.' I said: 'What happened after that?' He replied: 'Is there anything but kindness from He Who is the Most-Kind? He forgave my sins and granted me entry into Paradise.' I said: 'What did you do in order to achieve that?' He replied: 'By attending the gatherings of remembrance, my speaking the truth, my truthfulness in speech, my long standing in prayer and my patience with poverty.' I said: 'Munkar and Nakīr, they are true?' He replied: 'By Allāh, there is no

⁴⁰ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.188; Muslim, #287; and Nasā'ī, vol.4, pp.97, 98

god except He, they sat me up and asked me: 'who is your Lord? What is your deen? Who is your prophet?' I removed some dust from my grey beard and I said: 'Are the likes of me to be asked?! I am Yazīd Ibn Hārūn al-Wāsit?. I lived in the world for sixty years as the most knowledgeable of people.' Then one of the angels said: 'He has spoken the truth.' He is indeed Yazīd Ibn Hārūn. Sleep as a bride would, for there will be no terror for you after today."

Al-Marwazī said: 'I saw Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal in a dream, he was in a garden wearing two green robes and a crown made from gold. He was walking in a way which I never knew him to walk. I said: 'O Aḥmad! What's all this? You are walking in a way which I know is not your habit of walking?!' He replied: 'This is the walk of the servants in the abode of peace (*dār al-salām*).' I said: 'What is the crown on your head?' He said: 'My Lord, Mighty and Majestic, stopped me and took me to account easily. He clothed me, gifted me and brought me near and I look at Him. He gave me this crown saying: 'O Aḥmad, this is a crown of respect given to you as you said that My Words are Uncreated.'

Section Fourteen:

Concerning the Circumstances of the Deceased from the time when the Horn is Blown to his Final Residence in Paradise or Hell

We have indicated the circumstanceness of the grave (*aḥwāl al-qabr*), yet more severe than that is the blowing of the horn (*nafakh al-sūr*), the resurrection (*ba'th*), the accounting (*ḥisāb*), the weighing of the scales (*naṣb al-mīzān*) and the bridge (*ṣirāt*). There has to be faith in these states and long contemplation (*taṭwīl al-fikr*) over them. Most people do not establish their hearts with *īmān* in the Afterlife, and if a person was not to view the birth of animals and it was said to

him: “the one who created these animal likewise created humans from a despised fluid and then he has been fashioned, is intelligent and speaks”, his nature would intensely reject that. The wondrous way in which man has been created far exceeds his resurrection and return. So how can Allāh’s Ability and Wisdom be rejected? If your *īmān* is weak, strengthen it by reflecting on the first creation, for the second is the same and easier [for Allāh]. If you were to strengthen your *īmān* with that you will feel the fear and danger in your heart. So reflect and contemplate much on it as it will exhort you to be serious. The first sound to be heard by the dead will be when Isrāfil blows the horn. Imagine yourself being resurrected and bedazzled due to the sound, Allāh said:

وَيُفْخِ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ

“And the Horn will be blown; and at once from the graves to their Lord they will hasten.”

[*YāSīn* (36): 51]

Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “How can I be content when the angel entrusted to blow the horn has prepared himself, bending his forehead and listening with his ears, waiting for the instruction [from Allāh].” The Muslims asked: “What should we say O Messenger of Allāh?” He (ﷺ) said: “Say:

«حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ، وَتَوَكَّلْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ»

ḥasbunullāh wa ni‘ma al-wakīl, wa tawakkalnā ‘alā Allāh

Allāh is sufficient for us and the best of those on whom to depend, and upon Allāh we rely.”⁴¹

⁴¹ Tirmidhī, vol.1, p.70; Ibn Mājah, #4273; Aḥmad, vol.3, pp.7, 73; Abū Nu‘aym, vol.5, p.105, vol.7, p.130, 312; Ibn ul-Mubārak, p.1597—there is weakness in this narration. However, it has also been narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, Zayd Ibn Arqam, Anas and Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*)—and these make it ḥasan. Our Shaykh, al-Albānī, verified it in *Silsilah Aḥādith al-Ṣaḥībah*, #1079, also refer to *Fath ul-Bārī*, vol.11, p.317.

Then look at how people will be gathered on the Day of Judgement and standing naked, on a plain land with nowhere for people to hide.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁴² the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The people will be gathered on the Day of Judgement on reddish-white land like a pure loaf of bread (made from pure flour).”

Then reflect on the commotion and congestion of people, with the sun near to their heads, the intense sweating and the worry in the hearts.

In the ḥadīth it is mentioned that the sweat will pour out according to their actions.⁴³

Reflect O poor one on the question your Lord will Ask you about your actions, without any intermediary. For it has been reported from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “Three things will be presented to the people on the Day of Judgement: as for two of them then they will be discussed and excused, as for the third then the records will fly up and he will try to grab it with his left and with his right.”⁴⁴

Abū Barzah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said that Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The feet of the servant will not move until he is asked about: his life and how he spent it, his actions which he did; his wealth and how he earned it and what he spent it on; and his body and how he used it.”⁴⁵

⁴² Bukhārī, vol.11, p.323; Muslim, #2790

⁴³ Muslim, #2864; Tirmidhī, #2423 from Miqdād Ibn al-Aswad (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

⁴⁴ Tirmidhī, #2427 from Abū Hurayrah—the chain is weak. He also reported it from Abū Mūsā with another weak chain.

⁴⁵ Tirmidhī, #2416; al-Khaṭīb, vol.12, p.440—from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and it contains weakness, however it has other supporting narrations from Abū Hurayrah in al-Dārimī, vol.1, p.131; Abū Nu‘aym, *al-Ḥilyah*, vol.10, p.232; Ibn al-Dabīthī, *Dhayl Tarikh Baghdad*, vol.2, p.163, and from Mu‘ādh in al-Khaṭīb, vol.11, p.331—the ḥadīth is ḥasan.

Şafwān Ibn Muḥriz said: 'I took the hand of Ibn 'Umar (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) and we walked, when a young man approaches us and said: 'What did you hear Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say about salvation on the Day of Judgement?' Ibn 'Umar said: 'I heard Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) say: "Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will bring the believer near to Him and shelter him. Allāh will say to him: did you commit such and such sins? The man will say that he did and Allāh will keep asking to the extent that the man will think that he is ruined. Allāh will say: 'I covered you in the worldly life, and I will forgive you today.' Then he will be given his book of good actions. As for the disbelievers and hypocrites, the witnesses will say:

هَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ
كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۖ لَا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

"These are the ones who lied against their Lord. Unquestionably, the curse of Allāh is upon the wrongdoers."

[Hūd (11): 18]"

Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁴⁶

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁴⁷ from the ḥadīth of Abū Sa'īd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "There will be a bridge over Hellfire, and I will be the first to cross it."

Also in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "A bridge will be placed over the Hellfire." They said: "O Messenger of Allāh, what sort of bridge?" He said: "One which is liable to slip, it has hooks and spikes which prick like a thorn. The believers will cross over fast lightning strikes, with the speed of wind and the finest of race horses and riding beasts. Some will be cross safely while other will be injured on the way until the last of them will be released."

⁴⁶ Bukhārī, vol.5, p.70; and Muslim, #2768

⁴⁷ Bukhārī, vol.13, p.358; and Muslim, #183

Section Fifteen:

Hellfire and from it Allāh's Refuge is Sought

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: 'We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) one day and we heard some commotion. Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Do you know what that is?" We said: "Allāh and His Messenger know better." He said: "That is a stone which was thrown into Hell seventy years ago and now it has finally reached the bottom." Reported by Muslim.⁴⁸

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁴⁹ from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) who said: Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "The fire which you light in this world O son of Ādam is a seventieth of the Fire of Hellfire." They [the Companions] said: "By Allāh, this fire would be sufficient O Messenger of Allāh!" He said: "Hellfire has sixty-nine parts more than the fire of this world, and each part is hot as this."

Muslim⁵⁰ solely reported the ḥadīth of Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "Hellfire will be brought having seventy thousand reins, each rein held by seventy thousand angels."

Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said:⁵¹ 'The people of Hellfire will starve equal to their punishment. They call out seeking succour with food and they will be given *ḍarī'* [a bitter thorny tree]⁵² which neither nourishes nor satisfies hunger. They will cry out again, and then they will be given food which burns their throats. They will then remember that they used to vanquish this by drinking, so they will cry out for

⁴⁸ Muslim #2844

⁴⁹ Bukhārī, vol.6, p.238; Muslim, #2843; Mālik, vol.2, o.994; and Tirmidhī, ḥ2592

⁵⁰ Muslim #2842; and Tirmidhī, #2576

⁵¹ Relayed in marfū' form and with a weak chain, al-'Irāqī transmitted it in *al-Mughni*, vol.4, p.532 from al-Dārimī and it is mawqūf up to Abū'l-Dardā' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

⁵² 'Ḍarī'' is a vile blend, the *tafāsīr* differ as to what it is. See al-Rāghib, *al-Mufradāt*, p.295

drink. They will be given *hamim* [boiling water hung from hot metal] to drink and when they approach it the faces are burnt. Then they will say to the keepers of the Hellfire:

أَدْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ يَخْفَفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٩﴾

“Supplicate your Lord to lighten for us a day from the punishment.”

[*Ghāfir* (40): 49]

Then they will say: “Ask an angel.” They will then say:

يَذْكُرُكَ لِيَقْضِيَ عَلَيْكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَّنْكَثُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

“O Mālik, let your Lord put an end to us!” He will say, ‘Indeed, you will remain.’”

[*al-Zukhruf* (43): 77]

Then they will say:

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

“Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.”

He will say,

قَالَ أَخْشَوْا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

‘Remain despided therein and do not speak to Me.’”

[*al-Mu'minūn* (23): 107-108]

Then they will despair of any good and will begin to scream, wail and suffering.

Reflect on the snakes of Hell, for in the ḥadīth it is mentioned: “Indeed snakes of Hell are as long as the necks of camels and the scorpions of Hell are like mules.”⁵³

⁵³ Aḥmad, vol.4, p.191—from ‘Abdu’līlah Ibn al-Ḥārith and within the chain is weakness.

al-Ḥasan said: 'Hellfire consumes them seventy thousand times per day and then their bodies are reformed to taste the punishment over and over.'

Know that the description of Hellfire is lengthy and mention of the slightest of it is enough to instil fear. So if you are a believer in this pay close attention and fear what is in front of you as Allāh does not combine in a servant two fears and we do not mean the fear like when women cry for an hour and then giving up doing good actions, rather what we intend is the fear which prevents disobedience and exhorts to obedience. As for the fear of the fools who merely suffice with listening to these states and then say, "*we ask Allāh for help, we seek refuge in Allāh*" yet with this they persist in sin, and Shayṭān has tricked him as a lion tricks its prey.

Section Sixteen:

Loving Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)

Be in this world as a lover of Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) and be serious in esteeming his Sunnah as perhaps he may intercede for you, as he has an intercession which has precedence over all of the other prophets. For he will ask Allāh about the people from his *ummah* who committed major sins and he will save them. Have many righteous brothers as each believer has an intercession. Do not be deluded and rely on hope, as whoever hopes for something seeks it out and protects himself from acts of oppression as whoever dies on this before rectifying these oppressions then his fine will surround him on the day of judgement. This one will say "*he oppressed me*", this one will say "*he mocked me*", this one will say "*he was a bad neighbour*", this one will say "*he deceived me*"—you will not be free from their hands, once you have settled this it will be said "*there is no transgression today.*"

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The believers will be safe from the Hellfire on the Day of Judgement and they will be stopped at a bridge between Hell and Paradise where they will discuss with each other about injustices among them in the worldly life. When they are purified they will be admitted into Paradise.”⁵⁴

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Do you know who the bankrupt one (*muflis*) is?” The companions said: “According to us, the bankrupt one is the one who has no *dinār* and no provisions.” The Prophet (ﷺ): “The bankrupt one from my *ummah* is the one who comes on the Day of Judgement with prayer, fasting and *ṣakāt* yet he had abused this one, slandered this one, unjustly consumed the wealth of this one, shed the blood of this one and hit this one. So whomever was on the receiving end will take form his good actions and if his good actions dissipate his sins will be placed into his record and he will be thrown into the Hellfire.”⁵⁵

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “People will get their due rights on the Day of Judgement, even a sheep who lost its horn to a horned sheep [in a fight].”⁵⁶

All of these *ahādīth* are in the Ṣaḥīḥ collections so you should look, may Allāh grant you success, to the longevity of the safety of your good actions so as to enter that which invalidates *riyāʾ* and *ghībāh*.

We ask Allāh for safety and success.

⁵⁴ Bukhārī, vol.5, p.70

⁵⁵ Muslim, #2581; and Tirmidhī, #2420

⁵⁶ Muslim, #2582; and Tirmidhī, #2322

Section Seventeen:

Description of Paradise, we ask Allāh from His
Virtue to Grant us Entry Therein

Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘We said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, narrate to us about Paradise and its structure.’ He said (ﷺ): “It is made from gold and silver. Its scent is that of musk, its gravel is pearl and corundum, its earth is Saffron. Whoever enters it will be granted favour and will not despair, he will abide therein eternally and not die. His clothes will not wear nor will he grow old.”⁵⁷

Usāmah Ibn Zayd (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said once when mentioning Paradise: “Who is preparing for it? By the Lord of the Ka‘bah, it is like a sweet smelling flower in the wind, is it like sparkling light, it is like a flowing river, it is like a wife who does not die, in happiness, ease and luxury, in an eternal abode.” They said: “We are preparing for it O Messenger of Allāh!” He said: “Say: *insba’ Allāh*.”⁵⁸

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁵⁹ from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) who said: “Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, says: ‘I have prepared for My righteous servants that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard and no human heart has conceptualised.’”

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶⁰ also from Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) from the Prophet (ﷺ): “The first group to enter Paradise will have faced gleaming like the moon on a moonlit night. Then the group after them will have faces as bright as the stars, they will neither

⁵⁷ Tirmidhī, #2528; Aḥmad, vol.2, p.305 and within the chain is weakness however it is strengthened by other routes and supporting narrations.

⁵⁸ Ibn Mājah, #4332; Ibn Hibbān, #2640—the chain is weak.

⁵⁹ Bukhārī, vol.6, p.230; Muslim, #2834; Aḥmad, vol.2, p.316; Tirmidhī, #2540; al-Baghawī, #4370—from Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*).

⁶⁰ Part of the above mentioned ḥadīth.

urinate nor defecate, and they will neither spit nor blow their noses. Their utensils will be of gold, and their combs will be of gold and silver. They will have the scent of musk and their centres will be made from Āloe's wood. They will be married to the *ḥūr ul-'ayn*. They will resemble their faher Adam in height, that of sixty cubits tall."

In another narration: "Each of the men will have to wives, and the marrow of the bones their legs will be seen through the flesh out of beauty. The people of Paradise will have no differing or hatred among themselves, they will be like one heart glorifying their Lord day and night."

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "There will be two gardens in Paradise, the vessels and utensils each of which are silver and gold. The only thing between the people and looking at their Lord will be the mantle of grandeur on His Face in the Eternal Paradise." Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁶¹

Also in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶² from Abū Mūsā (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) again also from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "In Paradise will be a tent made from a hollow pearl, the width of which will be sixty miles long from all sides therein will be their wives unable to see each other, and the believer will go around inside it."

Know that Allāh has mentioned the pleasure of Paradise in the Qur'an, He says:

وَفِيهَا مَا نَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ

"And therein is whatever the souls desire and [what] delights the eyes."

[*al-Zukhruf* (43): 71]

⁶¹ Bukhārī, vol.8, p.479; and Muslim, #180

⁶² Bukhārī, vol.6, p.229; Muslim, #2838; and Tirmidhī, #2530.

And He says:

لَا يَبْعُونَ عَنْهَا حَوْلًا

“They will not desire from it any transfer.”

[*al-Kahf* (18): 108]

And Allāh further said:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ

“And no soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for eyes as reward.”

[*al-Sajdah* (32): 17]

The descriptions of Paradise are plentiful I have summarised what I was able to here.

The most virtuous reward to be attained in Paradise is to see Allāh, in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that it was said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, will we see our Lord?’ He replied (ﷺ): “Do you have any difficulty in seeing the moon on a moonlit night?” They said: “No.” He said: “Thus, you will see Him on the Day of Judgement.”

Section Eighteen:

The Wide Scope of Allāh’s Mercy

We conclude the book by mentioning the wide scope of Allāh’s Mercy, hoping for His Grace by this as we have no actions by which to seek His Pardon. However, we hope for that from His Mercy and Kindness, Allāh said:

قُلْ يٰۤاَعْبَادِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰۤى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا

“Say, ‘O My servants who have transgressed against them-

selves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.”

[*al-Zumar* (38): 53]

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “When Allāh completed creation, He Wrote in a Book which is with Him above the Throne: ‘Indeed My Mercy overcomes My Anger.’” Reported in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs.⁶³

Also Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said: “Indeed, Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, has one hundred mercies. He Sent a mercy to humans, jinn, insects and animals—due to this they are affectionate with each other and have mercy with one another. Even the animals are affectionate with their offspring. The other ninety-nine parts of His Mercy are what He will treat His servants with on the Day of Judgement.”⁶⁴

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Indeed your Lord, Blessed and Exalted, is Most Merciful. Whoever intended a good action but did not get to actually do it will have a good action recorded. If he actually did it Allāh will write from ten to seven hundred good actions. Whoever intended an evil action but did not do it will have a good action recorded. If he actually does it he will have an evil action written or Allāh will erase it.”⁶⁵

Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Allāh says: “Whoever does a good action will have ten the like thereof and more. Whoever does an evil action then his reward will be the like thereof or I will forgive. Whoever comes close to Me by a

⁶³ Bukhārī, vol.13, p.325; and Muslim, #2751

⁶⁴ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.362; and Muslim, #2752

⁶⁵ Bukhārī, vol.11, p.277; and Muslim, #130, 131

hand span I will draw close to him by an arm's length. Whoever comes close to Me by an arms length I will draw close to him by a fathoms length. Whoever comes to Me walking, I will do to him running.”⁶⁶

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that a man commits a sin and says: “O my Lord! I committed such and such sin, please forgive me.” Allāh, the Blessed and Exalted, will say: “My servant knows that he has a Lord Who will forgive his sin and takes the sinful to account. I have forgiven My servant.” He will remain for a while as Allāh Wills and then sin again and say: “O my Lord, I have sinned, please forgive me.” Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will say: “My servant knows that he has a Lord Who will forgive his sin and takes the sinful to account. I have forgiven My servant.” He will remain for a while as Allāh Wills and then sin again and say: “O my Lord, I have sinned, please forgive me.” Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, will say: “My servant knows that he has a Lord Who will forgive his sin. I bear witness that I have forgiven My servant, let him do as he wills.”⁶⁷ All of these traditions are authentic.

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶⁸ from the ḥadīth of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he said: “Some prisoners of war were brought in front of Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) and among them was a woman who breastfed all of the babies among them, she had lost her own baby and then found it. She picked the baby up and held it do her chest and breastfed it. Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Do you see this woman with her son?” We said: “Yes.” He said: “Allāh is More Merciful with His servants than this woman is with her child.”

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁶⁹ from the ḥadīth of Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “There is no servant [of

⁶⁶ Muslim, #2687

⁶⁷ Bukhārī, #7505; and Aḥmad, vol.2, pp.296, 403, 492

⁶⁸ Bukhārī, vol.10, p.360; and Muslim, #2754

⁶⁹ Bukhārī, vol.3, p.88; and Muslim, #94

Allāh] who says '*Lā ilaha ilā Allāh*' and dies upon that except that he will enter Paradise." I said: "Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft?" He said: "Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft, Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft, Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and theft, Even if he commits illegal sexual intercourse and steals." Then he said after the fourth: "Despite the nose of Abū Dharr [i.e. regardless of what Abū Dharr may think]."

Also in the Two Ṣaḥīḥs⁷⁰ from the ḥadīth of 'Itbān Ibn Mālik (*raḍiy>Allāhu 'anhū*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "Allāh has prohibited the Hellfire from the one who says '*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*' seeking by that Allāh's Face."

In the Two Ṣaḥīḥs from the ḥadīth of Anas Ibn Mālik (*raḍiy>Allāhu 'anhū*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: "The one who says '*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*' will come out of the Hellfire, those who had in their heart good the weight of a barley grain. Then those who said '*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*' will come out of the Fire, those who had in their heart good the weight of a mustard seed. Then out of the Fire will come who said '*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*' and had in their heart good the weight of atom."

Abū Mūsā (*raḍiy>Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "On the Day of Judgement there will not remain any believer except that a Jew or Christian will be brought before him and it will be said [by Allāh]: "This is your ransom for the Hellfire."'"⁷¹

'Abdu'llāh Ibn 'Amr Ibn al-Āṣ (*raḍiy>Allāhu 'anhū*) said: 'Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, on the Day of Judgement will bring a man from my *ummah* at the head of creation and spread for him ninety-nine books, each book stretches as far as

⁷⁰ Bukhārī, vol.2, p.132; and Muslim, #33

⁷¹ Muslim, #2767; Aḥmad, vol.4, p.402; Ibn Mājah, #4992; and al-Baghawī, #4234

the eye can see. Then He will ask him: 'Do you deny any of this? Have my Recording Angels who write the actions oppressed you at all?' The man will reply: 'No, my Lord.' Then He will ask him: "Do you have any excuse or good actions?" The man will be perplexed and reply: 'No, my Lord.' Then He will say: "On the contrary, you do indeed have one good action according to us, there is no transgression on you today." Then a card will be brought out upon which is written, '*lā ilaha ilā Allāh wa anna Muḥammadan 'abduhu wa rasūlabu.*' Then the man will be brought and he will say "What [use] is this card compared to these books." It will be said to him: "You will not be oppressed." Then his books will be placed on one scale, and the card in the other. The scale with the books will raise up [due to being light] and the scale with card [with '*lā ilaha ilā Allāh*' on it] will be weighty. For there is nothing which can outweigh Allāh's Name."⁷²

Al-Fuḍayl Ibn 'Ayād looked at the *tasbīhāt* of the people on the Day of 'Arafah and their crying, he said: 'Do you think that if these people asked a man for a sixth of a *dirham*, he would reject them?' It was said: 'No.' Then he said: 'By Allāh, the forgiveness with Allāh, Mighty and Majestic, is easier to dispense than that man giving to them trivial money.'

Ibrāhīm Ibn Adham said: 'One very dark and rainy night I was making *tawāf*, and I was still making *tawāf* up until before dawn. I raised my hands to the heavens and said: O Allāh, I ask You to Protect me from all that You Hate. Then a voice said: 'You ask for protection, all of My creation as or protection. If I protect you, over whom will I have preference?'

These *ahādīth*, along with what we have mentioned in the chapter of hope, give us glad tidings of Allāh's Kindness and His Vast Mercy

⁷² Aḥmad, vol.2, pp.213, 221; Tirmidhī, #2639; Ibn Mājah, #4300; Ibn Hibbān, #2524; Ḥākim, vol.1, pp.6, 529; al-Baghawī, *Sharḥ al-Sunnah*, vol.10, p.133 with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

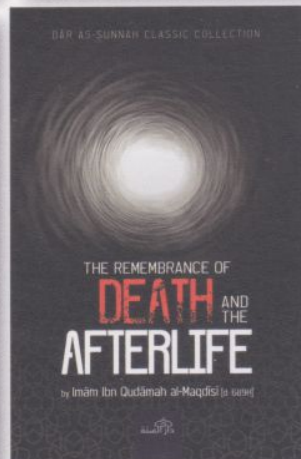
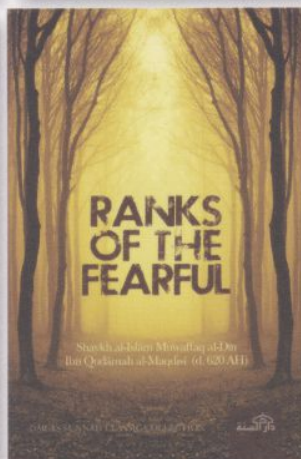
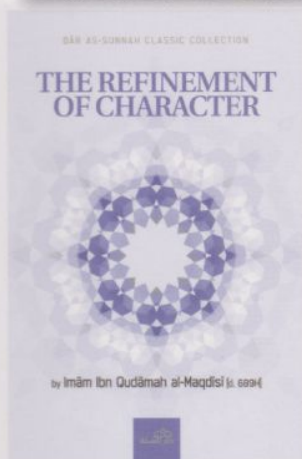
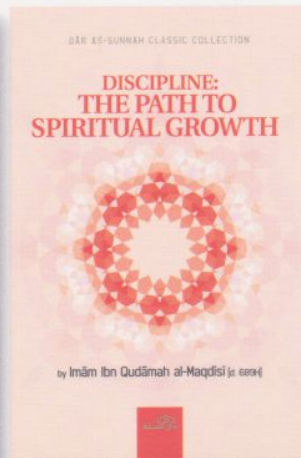
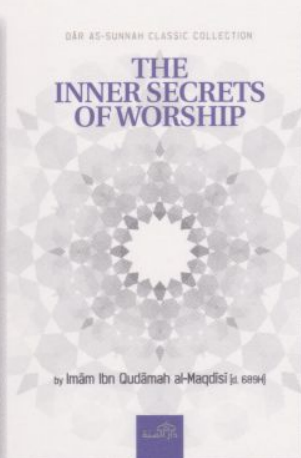
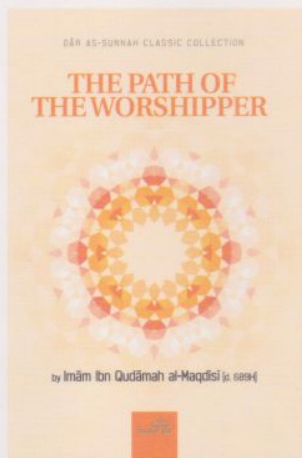
and Generosity. We hope from Allāh, Glory unto Him that He does not deal with us as we deserve but to give precedence to us as given to those who are its people. We seek Allāh's forgiveness for our statements which are contrary to our actions and for all things adorned for the sake of people; and to forgive us for all aspects of knowledge and action which we intended for Him and then became mixed with that which made it impure [and thus not solely for Allāh]. By His Kindness we seek intercession to His Kindness and Generosity, we ask Allāh for His Generosity, Indeed He is Ever-Near, Ever-Responsive.⁷³

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of the World, much good and blessed praise as our Lord Loves and is Pleased with and as appropriate for His Kind Face, the Mighty and Majestic.

And may peace and blessing be upon our Master
Muḥammad, his Family and Companions.

⁷³ *Āmīn, Alḥamdulillāh Rabbi'l-Ālamīn.* All praise is due to Allāh for granting success in completing this annotated commentary to this blessed book.

THE ROAD OF THE PURSUERS SERIES



Downloaded via
WWW.SUNNICONNECT.COM



www.darassunnah.com

PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL



by Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdīsī [d. 689H]

Allāh, the Most High Says:

"Those who purify their souls have succeeded and those who corrupt their souls have failed." [Qur'ān (91): 9-10]

Purifying the soul is the key to reforming the believer and succeeding in the daily battles against the diverse facets of the lower self, such as: pride, selfishness, arrogance, greed, lust, miserliness and other destructive tendencies.

The true servant of Allāh pays great attention to his inner thoughts and feelings. He works hard to rein them in, and not run headlong into disobedience of Allāh, the Most Exalted. Rectification of the heart is the only way to withstand the relentless onslaught of materialism and overcome the various challenges we face, leading to a happy and purposeful life and the Pleasure of our Lord Allāh, the Most High.

For the this reason the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: "Beware, in the body there is a piece of flesh; if it is sound, the whole body is sound and if it is corrupt the whole body is corrupt, and verily it is the heart." Muslim # 1599

In this fourth instalment, the author Imām Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdīsī - may Allāh have mercy on him - discusses how to purify the soul and remove the rust of desire and heedlessness which encapsulates the heart. He quotes from the Qur'ān, Sunnah, the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and stories from the salaf.

This powerful work will awaken the soul from procrastination and heedlessness, with the permission of Allāh, and lead to a pure and wholesome life - away from sins and vain desires. The reward is the Pleasure and Protection of Allāh the Most High, in this life, the grave and the afterlife.



Dār as-Sunnah Publishers

P.O. Box 9818, Birmingham,
B11 4WA, United Kingdom.
E-mail: info@darassunnah.com

www.darassunnah.com

Downloaded via

WWW.SUNNICONNECT.COM

ISBN-13: 978-1-904336-65-5

ISBN-10: 1-904336-65-5



© Copyright by

Dār as-Sunnah Publishers